

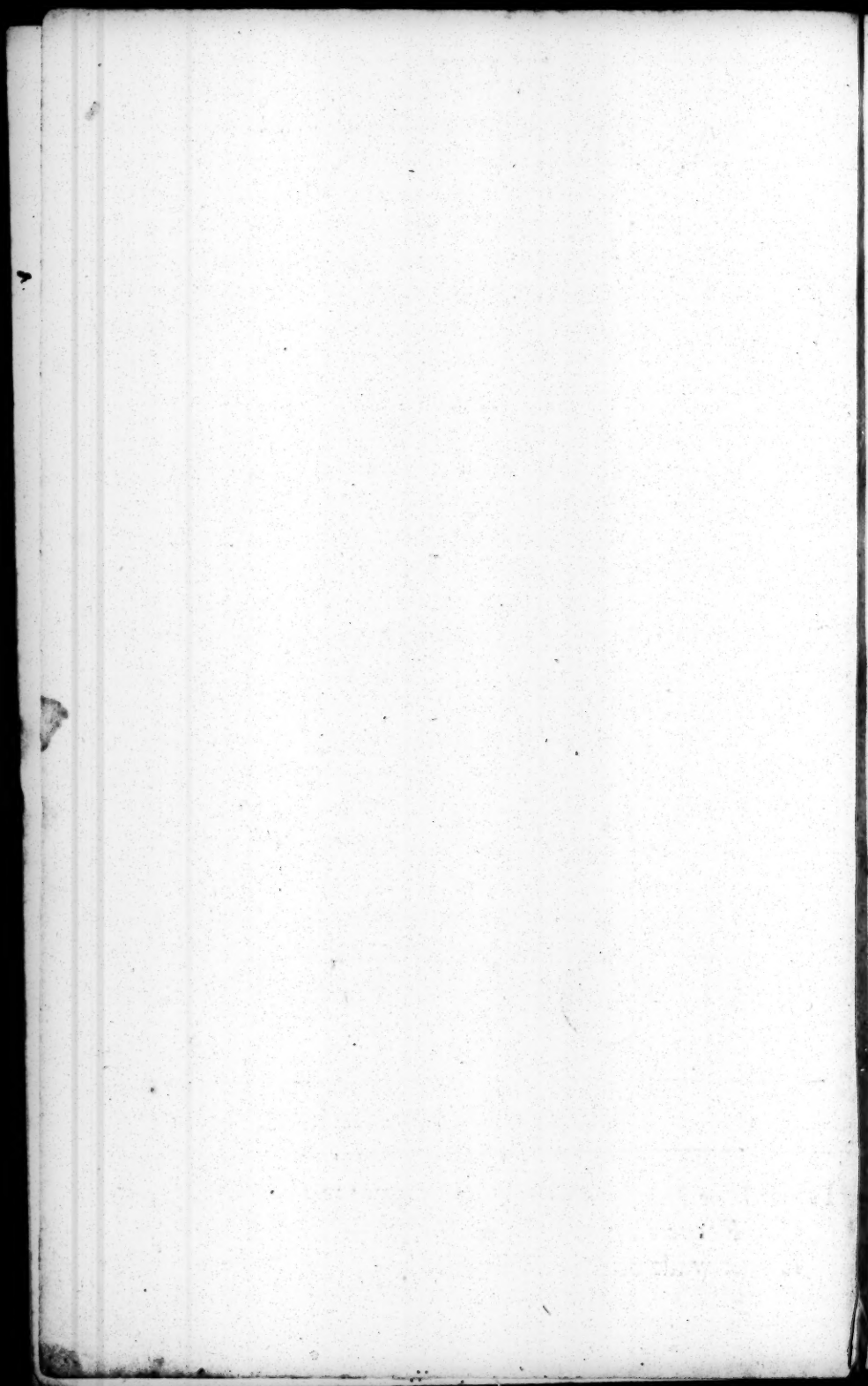
THE  
AMOURS  
OF  
CHARLES  
DUKE of  
MANTUA  
AND  
MARGARET  
COUNTESS of  
ROVERA.  
A  
NOVEL.

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*Translated out of Itallian.*

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Lower walk of the New-Exchange. 1685.





( 1 )



The LOVES of  
**CHARLES**  
DUKE of MANTUA ;

And of  
**MARGARET**  
Countess of  
**R O U E R A :**

*A Translation out of Italian.*

**T**He Princess *Mary* remaining  
a Widdow by the Death of  
the Prince her Husband ,  
imployed all her Art and  
Care in Governing the *State*, which we  
may yet call Hers ; and us'd much Di-  
ligence in Chusing fit *Ministers* to as-  
sist Her in that Affair, during the Mino-  
rity

rity of her Son *Charles*, who was too young to meddle with *Affaires* of that Nature: I need not here undertake the description of that extreme tender affection which all the World observ'd in this Princess towards the young Duke ; but will recommend it to those fond Women, who are Mothers of an only Son, and sole Heir to a great and Illustrious Family: The Caresses of this indulgent Mother were more powerful upon him, then all the Political, Scholastical, and Military instructions which he received every day from the different Masters of his Exercises. All the Ladies of the Court, to comply with the desires of the Dutchess (whose greatest pleasure was, to see her Son won by those extraordinary Caresses,) and to delight themselves in the great satisfaction they every day took in discovering new graces in that little Prince, made it their whole study to please him, by carressing and imbracing him even in their Armes ; although he was already in an Age wherein Nature usually excites those motions which Love often produces. One day one of the Principal Senatours of *Mantua* observing

serving the Ladies that waited on the Dutcheſs, & her Maids of Honour, were thus employ'd about this little Prince, could not refrain from ſaying aloud, That the State would have but an Effeminate Prince; in which, he proved no falſe Prophet.

Amongſt all the young Ladies that attended the Dutcheſs, there was one born in the City of *Cafale*, and was, by reaſon of her beauty, and good Meene, juſtly called, The Ornament of the Court, and delight of the Courtiers: The little Duke himſelf expreſſed a great inclination for her, and one may ſay much above what his tender years ſeem'd to permit: but perhaps her name being *Margaret*, this young Prince believed he did nothing below himſelf, in admiring the Jewel, which is generally called the pureſt.

The Princeſs, who was infinitely pleaſed with what ever her Son delighted in, recommended him particularly to this young Lady (not as to a Governeſs, her Age being almoſt equal, but onely) to divert him in his houres of Recreation, which was truly to recommend the Cabbage to the care of

the Kid, and to give the Sheep into the keeping of the Wolfe: For, this young Lady looking upon this Imployment as a good Fortune for her, and seeing very well that nothing was wanting in this young Prince but the Age to Govern, she so well applyed her self to get his Favour, in making use of all those little Arts that usually takes young People, that in a little time it was easie to be observ'd, her Intentions were not so much to serve him as a Master, but to gain him for a Friend; and, to change the quality of Servant into that of his Mistress.

The little Duke, who already began to take some other kind of delight in the Company of Ladies, then what little Children usually do, very easily sacrific'd these First Fires of his Love, which were newly born in him, to this young and subtil Play-fellow of his; who, on her side, was more and more inflam'd with Love to this young Prince, by the great and particular kindness he exprest to her.

In the mean time, whilest these two young hearts burn in a reciprocal Fire for one another, yet their years were so tender

tender, that all their Pleasures consisted in Talking, and taking each other by the hand, and perhaps in some little stolne Kisses now and then: All the Diversions which the Duke found in the Court amongst the Ladies, being, either to pull down the Stool, when they were set to work, or else to fling their work into the fire, or sometime to steal a Kiss, or to jumpe into their Armes, and talk of Love, which he as yet but little understood. But Jealousie, which is so great a Courtier in the Palaces of all Princes, fail'd not to make an early visit to the Court of that young Duke, and was already got amongst all his little Play-fellows, and began already to play the Tyrant in the Hearts of the young Ladies; and, chiefly amongst those who believed they merited the Dukes Favour most; if not in beauty, yet by reason of their great Birth, or in the Favour of the Dutcheß his Mother: yet, nevertheless, the Duke made still his greatest Court to Mademoiselle *Margaret*; and, she fail'd not to give him a return; and the more they perceiv'd the envy of the other Ladies, who indeavoured to

Cross



Cross them, the more powerful their Love grew to each other.

It was one day told the Dutcheſs, That her Son was ſo taken up with his love to *Madamoifelle Margaret*, that he would never make the Sign of the Croſs with any Hand but Hers: but the Dutcheſs rallying preſently that Man which told her ſo, Answered him; Where there is no Malice, Love is ſincere; Truſting to the innocent Childiſhneſs of ſuch tender years, and not being able to imagine, that a young Child of nine years old ( as he was ) could have a Paſſion for a Girl of the ſame Age. The Mother of *Madamoifelle Margaret* liv'd alſo in this Court, and waited upon the Dutcheſs, which was the reaſon of her daughters being there ſo young: This old Lady was ſo crafty, that ſhe wanted nothing but *Poetry* to be that *Coriſco* in the *Poſtor Fiao*; the more ſhe diſcover'd ſigns of Love in the Duke to her Daughter, the more ſhe inſtructed her in the Art to increaſe and mannage that growing Paſſion; and Taught her the Art of making Love, which ſhe underſtood in Perfection.



In the mean time the Dutcheſs beginning to think it now high time to withdraw her Son from the company of Women, amongſt whom, he ordinarily, like other young Princes, paſſed away the beſt part of the day; ſhe choſe a Governour for him, prudent, and of approved integrity, and indowed with all neceſſary qualifications fit for a man that was to undertake ſo great an Employment as the Education of a young Prince. The Perſon ſhe made choice of, as moſt fit, was the *Marqueſs of Arrigony*; who receiv'd this charge with all the demonſtrations of Affection and joy imaginable; hoping, that his Services would in time render him very conſiderable in the Government, by the impreſſions he ſhould make upon the ſpirit of this young Prince; but, it arriv'd quite contrary to his expectations.

When the Dutcheſs committed this young Duke unto the Care of the Marqueſs, ſhe above all recommended to him three things: *First*, To Teach him all the Exerciſes of a Gallant Man with Mildneſs, that he might learn them with delight. *Se-*

*condly*, To be sure not to neglect the Finding out what he was chiefly inclin'd to, and most capable of; least he should give him too hard a Lesson. *Thirdly*, And above all, not to force him to do any thing against his will, and was absolutely against his inclination; and to be sure to allow him his houres of Divertilements with the Ladies of the Court, and principally with *Mada-moiselle Margaret*, who was chiefly acquainted with his Humour.

To speak the Truth, these orders were not at all sutable to the Prudence nor Humour of the Marquess; who could not imagine to what end they were given him, seeing nothing in them extraordinary; besides, he was vext within himself, to see, by that, the Princess lookt upon him as a Man very unread in what belong'd to the Government of a Prince: He Promis'd nevertheless to obey her Highness exactly, and not to be wanting in that fidelity which was so natural to his Family, and so particular to himself; yet he could not hold from saying, That he was very ready to serve his Master to his capacity; but, in his opinion, it would

would be better to disaccustom a little this young Prince from the company of Ladies, then to use him so much to their Conversation; since he could receive no Lessons from them but what were Effeminate, which was a thing very injurious to Princes: To which the Dutchess reply'd; That the honest and lawful converse with Women taught great Men to Rule with gentleness; and that she desir'd nothing more in her Son, nor from himself. The Marquess having no more to say after that Declaration, made no Answers but of Protestations of obedience to her Highness in all things. After that the Dutchess sent for the young Duke, and commanded him to look upon the Marquess as the guide of his Person and actions; and perswaded him to think it no trouble to follow the Advises of a Man, who would inspire no Sentiments into him but those of his Glory and advantage.

The Marquess having paid his Respects and Acknowledgments to the Dutchess, retir'd himself till the Apartment order'd for him was made ready: In going out of the Hall he met with  
Mounseur

Moun sieur *Pianezza* a Friend of his, and his particular Confident, to whom he related his new happiness in the Dutcheffes Favour; withal, telling him the particular Orders he received from her concerning the Education of the young Duke, not forgetting a word of all had past, especially that passage which concern'd of the young Dukes Recreations amongst the Ladies of the Court: *Pianezza* judging this Order not very agreeable to the Marquess, whisper'd to him very softly; Monsieur, Be you sure to tye the Assle where the Master bids you, and let the Wolves eat it if they please.

The Marquess answer'd, smiling; I am too Old to make use of opportunity; and too Young to serve the Amours of another.

Madamoiselle *Margaret*, who knew the humour of the Marquess was more inclin'd to Rigour, and Duty, then of Compliance, would not have been troubled to have seen the Education of her young Duke committed to any other then he; though it is certain she was too young to make this distinction of her self, but that she was instructed by  
her

her Mother. Now it happen'd one day, that this young Lady meeting with the Duke and the Marquess together, she said ( without doubt, by the Instructions of her Mother ) Sir, I am extream glad to see the Choice the Dutchess has made of you for the Conduct of our Prince; for certainly, it could have been committed to no person in the World so fit as your self; whose merit is so universally esteem'd, and 'tis likely to be most profitable for his Highness advantage. The Marquess guessing from whence this Complement came, and that her Mother had taught her what to say, could not refrain from Laughing a little; and taking her by the hand, acknowledg'd her Favour by all the expressions he could think of: taking very much delight in the discourse of that young Lady, who, to say truth, besides her other extraordinary beauties, was very agreeable in her discourse.

Another time, meeting her in the Court of the Pallace, she told the Marquess, almost Laughing; Now the Prince is so much yours, we can be allow'd no part in him: The Marquess  
also



also Laughing, and putting his hand upon her Face, answered her, My pretty little Lady, the Duke is too young to be yours, therefore you ought not to be angry that he is so much mine: Thereupon the young Duke taking Madamoiselle *Margaret's* side, answered presently, I will be theirs that will be mine; Would you have me be yours? The young Lady only answer'd with a low Curt'sy, and a Look, which shew'd the desires and sentiments of Her heart.

Some few Moneths after that, the Marquess being Declar'd Governour, and the *Duke of Parma* being to pass through that Countrey to go to *Venice*, the Dutchess, although he intended to make that Voyage Incognito, fail'd not to send the Marquess, at all adventures to meet him, with her young Son the Duke; and the Dutchess desiring, that he should be received in passing by, with all the Honours imaginable, though he intended not to be known: The Complemental dispute between these two Princes at this Ceremonious Enterview, kept them so long in the hot Sun in the Fields, that the young Duke



Duke received no little trouble by the heat which is so ordinary there in the Moneth of *June*: In the mean time all things having pleas'd the Duke of *Parma* very much in this meeting, and the young Duke returning home, he fell into a little Feaver, accompanied with so great a pain in his head, that it was the trouble of the whole Court, especially the Dutcheß, who was most sensibly afflicted; no Remedies imaginable for his distemper were omitted, yet nevertheless they did no good, for the Feaver and extreame pain in his head rather increased; although Madamoiselle *Margaret*, whose grief was equal to her tenderness, stirr'd not from his Bed-side; laying her hand sometimes upon his head, which was no small pleasure and ease to the young sick Prince. The Dutcheß his Mother, who was almost every day coming and going to his Chamber, to inquire of his condition, asking him one day, How he did? he answer'd her boldly; Madam, ever since Madamoiselle *Margaret* has toucht my head, I have scarce felt any Paine. It was not very difficult for the Mother to believe her Son, from the observation

observation she had already made of his Love to that young Lady, and therefore she said to him, Well, my son, she shall be put to bed to you, if the Marquis your Governour will approve of it; He will not approve of it, (replied the yong Prince) because he does not know my disease: I do know it said the Marquis, (who was not very far off) and I know that your sickness has need of a remedy.

During this sickness of three or four days the hearts of this *Pyramus*, and of this *Thisbe* inflam'd extreamly, but in a way very natural and conformable to their age, which did not yet allow them any other thoughts but what were innocent; This young Lady, who was not less interested in the repose of the Prince than of his health, stirr'd not from his bed-side from morning until night, with a Fan in her hand to drive away the Flyes, which in that Countrey ordinarily torments the sick.

He being at last recovered from this fit of sickness, applyed himself anew to his exercises, though with little inclination or profit; The Marquis saw very well that the love which this young Prince

Prince had for this *Mademoiselle Margaret* grew up with him, and that his desires of profiting in Learning those things more fit for his Study (without which a Prince looses his best ornament) diminish'd every day as he grew older, which was a most sensible affliction to the Marquis, who took all the pains imaginable about him.

One evening after Supper the Dutches walking in her Garden with the Marquis, she askt him the reason why her son made so slow a Progress in those exercises he had learnt, as well Military as others, and wonder'd that at 14 years of age as he was then, there was nothing at all extraordinary to be observ'd in him. The Marquess fancying the astonishment the Dutches had put on was a reproach to his diligence and affection both, was very much piqu'd, and a little mortified, nevertheless without discovering his resentments; Me thinks, Madam, said he, if I may have leave to say so to your Highness, that your Speeches are very much alter'd from your declar'd opinion to me that minute your Highness was pleas'd to give me that honourable employment

ployment of Governour to the young Duke your son; For, I remember you commanded me then, to instruct him in all things with mildness and moderation, and now your Highness wonders why I have not forc'd his nature, and his strength. I confess, Madam, I scrupled nothing more than disobeying your Orders, but to deal ingeniously with your Highness, I must tell you this truth, that if my affection to him and my cares had not rous'd him a little, and almost constrain'd him to apply himself to those exercises the most necessary for him, that he would this day be more ignorant than he is; although whatever he possesses appears very inconsiderable to your Highness, the Duke can sit very well, and has a very becoming grace on horsback, he has often ran at the ring and won the Prize, to the shame and confusion of the most experienc'd Cavaliers in that exercise, he is not very unskilful in his Arms, and for his Dancing, certainly your Highness can better judge of that than I: it is true he has but little inclination to the French and Latine Tongues, nevertheless he understands the one, and begins



begins to speak the other; but if your Highness will permit me to speak my opinion, I must tell you if that *Mada-  
moiselle Margaret* were made tutour to the Prince, or were the onely thing he were to study, he would without all question profit much better then he does. For he spends more time in making love to this Lady, then he allows to his Lessons: whil'st the Duchess and the Marquis were in this discourse, the young Duke came into the walk, and the Duchess immediately askt him, if it were true that the Marquis said; to which he suddenly made answer without examining what it was, that it was a thing impossible for him to answer a demand upon the sudden of a thing he was ignorant of; the Duchess would have pressed him further, but that minute she receiv'd Letters of great concern from *Venice* which she read, and communicated them to the Marquis as she was wont to do all Papers of publick business. In the mean time the young Dukes affection for *Mada-  
moiselle Margaret* increased every day, and grew faster then he; he ador'd and respected her, and he did not seem to

live when he was absent from her, though but a moment, every one knows there is no Lady in the Court so Fair, nor so cruel, whom interest and ambition does not soften, to gain the love of their Prince, nay, the very men of Quality, the most considerable amongst the Courtiers often shut their eyes and serve their Prince, neer those of their own Relations; certainly there never was a Prince so passionately desir'd by the Ladies as this Duke *Charles*; he was often treated by many great men, to no other end but to shew him their wives, or their Daughters, but to their great disappointment, because this Prince lookt onely modestly upon them, his love to Mademoiselle *Margaret* made him neglect all others, looking upon none but her with tenderness and love, and often protested he would not change her for all the Fairest Ladies in the Universe.

And now this young Duke is arriv'd to his eighteenth year of age, I will call him no longer the little Duke. This Duke then went often into the Chamber of Mademoiselle *Margaret's* mother, where he was always flatter'd  
and



and carrels'd, nay, the mother her self shut him up sometimes with her daughter, and left them alone upon the bed playing together, carrying the Key away in her Pocket. One day the Duke going to walk, perhaps with design, in the Palace Garden, he met the mother and her daughter walking alone in the wood, the Duke no sooner approached them then he cryed, Mademoiselle have a care in coming so often into this wood you are not raviisht. The mother (who was the craftiest woman in the world) answer'd him presently, So she is raviisht by a Prince, there will be no great hurt; but the Prince replied as quickly, You had better let her give the Favour to a Prince, then stay till he force it: It is true, said the mother, but Favours gain'd that way are more sweet and secret. The Prince in the mean time took the young Lady by the hand to walk with him in the wood, whil'st the mother return'd to the Palace very well pleas'd to leave her daughter in such good company, who stay'd three hours together in that place, none knows what they did: But after they had taken their walk the

Prince waited upon Madamoiselle *Margaret* to her mothers chamber, to whom he said, Here, Madam, take your daughter which I restore you in the same condition you left her with me. I believe what you say, Sir, answered she, because you are a Prince.

From that day Madamoiselle *Margaret* began to take upon her, and shew some kind of Empire over the Duke, and the Prince found no inclinations in himself to resist her. The Duchess appear'd indifferent, and did not seem displeas'd at their Friendship, imagining that the Duke was oblig'd one way or other to divert his youth, and she was the more willing to allow him this Friendship with Madamoiselle *Margaret*, because she was well acquainted with her disposition, and believ'd she would not ingage the Duke into any disorder'd way of life prejudicial to his Person or Fortune, and so while all this past, she shut her eyes, and took no notice at all, and though one day she hid her self to watch their actions, yet she could discover nothing between them but testimonies of a Friendship which reason allows of.

But

But since the Love of these two persons was become the general discourse, the Duchess consulted many times very seriously with the Marquis *Arigone*, who very farre from approving this too violent inclination, as many others did, who were well enough pleas'd to let the Duke freely pursue his inclinations: He on the contrary, forgot nothing, to let them see they ought to have prevented him: the Marquess was press'd on by these reasons;

In *Mantua* there dwelt a widow that was one of the most considerable women of that place, who was mother to one of the most fair and agreeable young Ladys of all that State. This woman who was not very rich in worldly goods, suiting herself to her fortune, liv'd onely in the quality of a Gentlewoman, and not like a great Lady; The Marquis, who had a passionate kindness for her, let no occasion pass of diverting his melancholly hours at her house, and as she was not very cruel to him, she granted him willingly those Favours that Love demands, without expecting interest, imagining that the

Marquess, who was naturally very grateful, would not fail, for the Mothers sake, who granted him all things, to serve the Daughter to his Highness the Duke; and this opportunity pleas'd the Marquess very well, of shewing himself grateful to the kind Widow, in procuring the Love of the Duke for her Daughter, and also of testifying his Affection to his Prince, in bringing to him one of the most Accomplish'd young Women amongst his Subjects; but, since he fear'd it a thing impossible to do, so long as this passion of the Dukes to the Lady *Margaret* continued; he tryed all wayes to stifle it, but unprofitably; because the Duke was so insensible for all other Women, as well Maids as Wives, that neither the handsome nor ugly work'd any effect upon him; for he us'd them both so indifferently, they had no reason to be jealous of one another: The Lady *Margaret* was the only Favourite, and the most lov'd; and what beauty soever hapned to be in the Dukes presence, he had eyes for none but she.

One day the Marquess imagining that it was impossible for the Duke to see

see that fine young Lady of his Acquaintance, and not fall in love with her, carryed him to her Mothers house, who had invited him to that purpose; and had spar'd for no Cost, nor Ornament, to set off the Beauty of her Daughter, but all was to no purpose: and though the Marquess and the Mother left this young Lady and the Duke alone two houres together in a Chamber, the Duke sat by her, as if she had not been there, without speaking one obliging word to her: The insensibility of this Duke was as a Dagger to the heart of this young Lady; and, in truth, What is more vexatious to a Woman, then to see, that all the arts she has us'd to gain a heart signifie so little in the end. The Marquess quickly perceiv'd, that the Duke was not very well pleas'd in the place where he had brought him; therefore in returning home to the Palace, he begun to praise her extreamly; the Duke, although he seem'd to take no notice, and yet nevertheless forc't by the Marquess to speak of that Ladies Beauty he came from, said to the Marquess, My Lord, This Lady is faire  
C 4 enough



enough for you, who sees her every day, but not for me, who never saw her before, and looks not upon her so often as you do: The Marquess reply'd, Your Highness must then see her often, that you may think her fairer than now you do: The Duke answer'd smiling, If I should see her once more, certainly I should think her more ugly then I do now. The poor Marquess was mad at this, and especially when the Duke, whil'st they were talking, turn'd about and shew'd him the Lady *Margaret*, who they met in the Street; See there, my Lord Marquess, said he, there is the fairest amongst all that are faire.

Whil'st these things past, the Dutchess growing angry, to see her Son so far gone in Love with the Lady *Margaret*, carryed by some unknown Politick reasons, and perhaps at the earnest Solicitations of the Marquess, sent the Mother and the Daughter away to *Casal*, yet with all the Civility imaginable, and with a particular Promise to Marry her very suddenly, as indeed it happen'd soon after: The Duke express'd no great signs publickly of resentment



sentment for her going away, hiding his trouble, without all doubt, very prudently, to take all suspicion from the Court: Till then, it was believ'd by most, that nothing but vertue had pass'd between this Lady and the Duke; but others, that lookt nearer into the business, and could see farther into matters of Love, believ'd the contrary; not being able to imagine, how Vertue could subsist with so great a Liberty: and that a young Girle, who desir'd nothing more then the heart of a Prince, could refuse him any thing. The Duke certainly was not without desires, nor the young Lady without a good will; the youth of them both, and the great liberty allowed them, gave strange causes of suspicion: In fine, believe who will, that all their time was spent in saying their Chapels, and their Pater-nosters, for my part I never will.

Some time before the parture of the Lady *Margaret*, the Duke had many long and private Conferences with her, where there wanted no Tears on both sides at that cruel separation, as a Weeping-Woman observ'd; he could not  
for

forbear promising to Write to her, till he had the opportunity of going to visit her at *Casal*, which he gave her his Word should be very suddenly: These Protestations of the Dukes rais'd her Heart a little, which was so sunk with the Fears and Troubles of a cruel Absence she was to suffer, and gave her courage to ask his Highness a word or two under his Hand, every moneth at least; which Favour she demanded of him in these Words; If your Highness will please to Write to me once every moneth, it will give me every day a Paradice: The Duke embracing her, said, with all the tenderness of a passionate heart, go, and believe, that nothing in the World shall ever be capable to carry me from loving you.

She was scarce arriv'd at *Casal*, but the Duke writ a Letter to her, as well for his own satisfaction, as for the contentment of her he Lov'd, it was thus

Margaret,

## MARGARET,

My Heart;

**T**His is the first Letter which I write to you, with one of those Pens that are guided by Love ; I address to you, whom I alone adore, as the onely and first object of my Love : To tell you how sensible I am of your absence, you must aske this Heart, which thinks more of you, then of it self ; I do not sware it to you ; the Words of Princes needs no Oaths to Authorize them : however, I shall give you such proofes, that you your self will not desire greater. Let me know the success of your Voyage, and the state of your Health since you went from hence, and whether you Love him that is wholly your

CHARLES.

This Letter was given in charge to a Post that was sent from Court to the Governour of Casal, with express Order to give it to no other hands but she to whom it was directed; The Joy  
of

of this young Lady was so extraordinary in receiving it, that she read it three or four times over in the presence of the Man that brought it; and every time with a Face over-joy'd, to that extremity she seem'd to him, she would have eaten it, that so her heart might have been the Cabinet to preserve it. The Mother was not at home when her Daughter was thus entertaining the Post, and examining him with great concern of the Dukes health, and chiefly of his Employments; and whether he did not particularly Visit some Lady or other with great Familiarity: but, in these Questions to him, she seem'd not to understand what she did, for a Man of that condition, that sees the Court but at a distance, is not to be askt such Questions: But, it is true, she was at that time to be pardon'd, since the occasion of that Letter was enough to put her into extraordinary transports for him she Lov'd. The Mother being return'd, gave order for something for the Post to eat, whil'st in the mean time she read over and over again with her Daughter the Dukes Letter, and consulted together for the  
 Answer,

Answer, which they return'd by the same Messenger, in these words;

## Great PRINCE;

**T**O tell your Highness how much comfort your Letter gave me, is impossible for me to express; I could not defend my self from vanity, in reading so many proofes of Affection from your Highnesses Goodness: if I were not well acquainted with the nature of it, which is indulgent to all those who like me, Courts with a most humble Respect all opportunities of obeying your Highnesses Commands. It will not be hard for you to find amongst your Subjects a Merit above mine; but, I Question very much if your Highness can find any more affectionate to your Service then I am: I have already Sworn to you all the Fidelity and Service can be expected from a Person of my Sex. It belongs to your Highness to Command, and me to Obey; yet my Feares tell me, that you do not so often think of Commanding me, as I do of Blindly Obeying you. As for the Account you are Graciously pleased to desire



*desire of my Journey hither, I assure your Highness, it had been very pleasant and happy for me, if every step I made to Casal had not carryed me from what I left behind at Mantua, so dear to me: Your Highness asks me if I love you; How can you believe it possible to be so ungrateful, not to love a Prince that loves me. I will say nothing more, but that I am and will be, to your Highness, Great Prince,*

A most Humble,  
and Obedient Servant,

*Margaret.*

The *Dukes of Mantua* had a Custom, of going three or four times every year to *Casal*, to Visit that place, so considerable, for its Scituation, and because it is the Capital City of *Montferat*: The Duke resolved for the future to make that place his ordinary residence; carryed more by his Love to the Lady *Margaret*, then for Interest of State: And none can express with what repugnance he quitted that Town to go to *Mantua*, when at any time the necessity

necess'ity of his Affaires called him thither; yet he indeavour'd to conceal the true reason of his stay so much in that place, by pretending the Ayre was so much better; saying often, That the Ayre of *Mantua* was an Ayre for *Monks* to dwell in, but that of *Casal* was an Ayre for the Seat of a Prince: And, in truth, he was very much in the right, when he spoke so of those two places, so contrary to each other; for the Ayre of *Casal* was extraordinary good, and that of *Mantua* had nothing at all commendable in it: though, 'tis true, the Ayre where Princes reside purifies admirably. All Affaires the Duke took in hand at *Mantua* prosper'd very ill; but, on the contrary, it seem'd that *Casal* was Fortunate to all his Enterprises: There was scarce a day but the Duke complained of some Indisposition or other whil'st he was at *Mantua*; his Head, his Stomach, and I know not how many more Infirmities tormented him, or at least he pretended it: but, when he was at *Casal*, he never made the least complaint of any thing, whether he had cause or not; but, if it hapned, that some Fits of an Ague, Feaver

Feaver; or any distemper seiz'd upon him at *Casal*, he would lay the fault upon his having staid too long at *Mantua*.

The Dukes of *Mantua* have a Palace near to *Casal*, call'd the *Margaret*, whether they have alwayes been accusom'd to divert themselves some time of the Summer; and there was a Physitian in *Mantua*, who, being pretty well acquainted with the temper of the Duke, and the inclination he had for the Lady *Margaret*, understood very well, that all these Distempers the Duke so often complained of at *Mantua*, had no other cause but an Amorous Feaver; and therefore he fail'd not to advise the Duke to visit often that wholesome Ayre of *Casal*: And, whil'st the other Physitians were searching out the cause of the Dukes disease, and busying their heads to find a remedy, this wise happy brother of theirs advis'd the Ayre of *Margaret* as the only place of Cure for his Highness, and was well rewarded for his paines by the Duke, whose delight at *Casal* you may easily imagine was great, and his health perfect. The satisfaction of  
going

going to *Casal*, and leaving *Mantua*, was plainly discover'd in the different Journeys he made, in going and returning between those two places; by the hast he made to the one, and the slow pace he went towards the other: to *Mantua* he went with a *Tortoyse's* pace, and to *Casal* he flew as fast as an *Eagle*: Whensoever his Important Affaires oblig'd him to go from *Casal* to *Mantua*, he Travell'd like a Prince; but, when he was to leave *Mantua*, and go towards *Casal*, he went in Post. The Pastimes of the Duke were not very great, nor divertizing to the Court, for his greatest pleasure was in visiting the Lady *Margaret*, in whose Company his most delightful houres were spent; and it was no great difficulty for a young Prince to entertain himself very pleasantly with a young handsome Woman, instructed by an old cunning Mother; who, in her youth, had at one time oblig'd more then four several *French* Gentlemen, whilst they staid at *Casal*. The house of this Lady was not far from the Castle, in one of the fairest Streets of the Town, in which place the Tennis Court was kept; the

D

Duke,

Duke, who hated Tennis when he was at *Mantua*, took great delight in it at *Casal*; perhaps to shew his Mistress his address; but, he spoyl'd his own design: For, he not being able to take his Eyes from the Window where she was, he hardly stroke one Ball of three. It was no small diversion to the spectators, to see those two Lovers speak with their Eyes and Hands, and use a thousand other pleasant Gestures, in that place, where there was constantly more persons assembled to observe them, then to see the good play of those that were at Tennis: In the mean time jealousy seiz'd furiously upon all the Ladies in that place; but, amongst them all, it chiefly laid hold of a young Woman whose name was *Nata*, Grandchild to the President; she almost dyed with envy at the Dukes Courtship to the Lady *Margaret*, believing her self much handsomer than her Cousin the Lady *Margaret*; and had great desires (at least) to share with her in the Dukes Affection: and her Grief increased the more from the vexation she had, to see, that all her Beauty and Ornaments had not power enough



nough to draw one kind look from his Highness, for whom she had drest herself to no purpose. The Duke never went to Play, but by his dearly Beloved *Margarets* command, his Linnen was alwayes brought to her House; he scarce toucht the Ball three times, but away he must go to shift himself in her Chamber, leaving the rest of the Players at Tennis, sometimes three houres, to wait till he came down to make an end, which he sometimes commanded them to do. A *French* Gentleman hapning to be in the Tennis Court one day, was by chance on the Dukes side, who was gone up, as his Custom was, to the Lady *Margaret*; this *Frenchman*, impatient (as those of his Nation commonly are) at the Dukes giving so long a time to rub himself, fell into a passion, and said publickly to one of his Camerades; If the Duke of *Mantua* must (as is reported) have the Command of the Imperial Army for the King of *Spain*, *Lombardy* will quickly be ours; for he takes up more time in changing his Shirt, then the *French* do in taking a Town.

There was no body but plainly saw this so often changing of Linnen was rather a pretence of the Dukes, than necessity; nothing moving him to run up to her Chamber, but some Amorous fancy, which the sight of her at the Window awaken'd in him; and there was great reason to believe it, for she never stirr'd out of the Balcony as long as the Prince was in the Tennis Court; but, immediately vanish'd when he went out to go to her Chamber; and, as soon as he was got into the Street, to return to his Play, she appear'd in the Balcony again: which discover'd easily, that he sought not pleasure, but that, of being near his Goddess; and she glory'd in nothing more, then to let the People see, she had been giving him his Shirt.

In the mean time the Mother of this young Lady, and also the Duke, began seriously to think, of finding out a Match for this beloved *Margaret*, who wanted no pretenders, her power being so great with the Duke; who, in this design, to Marry her, intended not so to rid himself of her, whom he lov'd passionately: Nor did the old Mother

saw Mother resolve so to lose her; but, they  
 took this way, to disguise those shame-  
 ful effects, which usually follow these  
 kind of dishonest Passions, as it ordi-  
 narily happens in *Italy*, where the Hus-  
 band often serves for a Cover: For,  
 an unmarried Woman, though she is  
 courted by a Prince, is lookt upon in  
 that Country as infamous, if she enter-  
 tain him; But on the contrary, let a  
 Married Woman be never so impu-  
 dent, she is nevertheless very well re-  
 ceiv'd amongst all Ladies of the great-  
 est quality.

The Family of this Lady *Margaret*  
 had been so blasted by the abominable  
 carriage of her Mother with the *French-*  
*men*, and the *Spaniards*; her eldest Sist-  
 er particularly, whose name was the  
 Countess *Louize*, lately a Widow, had  
 been notorious, and had liv'd the life of  
 a common Curtizan, taking Money of  
 any body; living that kind of life,  
 which is so much practis'd amongst  
 those Women, so well known by Tra-  
 vellers; she fell in love with a *French-*  
*man*, who came off better cheap, and  
 almost for a simple Grand Mercy; he  
 being, as one may say, more Court'd

by that young Widow, then he car'd for, which made her fall into strange disorders, when he was forc'd to return into *France* with the *French* Army, in which he was an Officer, and left that poor disconsolate Widow to re-take that habit of Mourning she had so lately quitted; and, it is believ'd, she had remain'd unconsolable, if the *Frenchmans* place had not been kindly taken up by a young Earle in *Casal*; but, what was most remarkable, was this Countesses flattering her self with the hopes of Marrying this young Earle, by the Credit her Sister had with the Duke, and his Authority; she gave him all the Liberties imaginable, and they liv'd together like Man and Wife, with so publick a Scandal, that the Bishop intended to Excommunicate them, but was soon prevented from that trouble; for, the young Earle at last cloyed with the Embraces of that Lady, and weary of her Addresses, began to leave her off by little and little; which, the Countess perceiving, address'd herself to her Sister, desiring her to perswade the Duke, to Command the Earle to Marry her; which, when the Duke

Duke went about to do, the young Earle briskly answered; Sir, The Earles of *Casal* do not use to Marry Whores: Thus this poor abus'd Countess sought her satisfaction in her patience, and try'd no more that vain attempt, of Marrying the Earle by the Dukes Authority and Justice, as her Sister encouraged her to hope; for the Earle Swore, he would rather a thousand times die a Man of Spirit, then live a base Cuckold: So the Countess seeing Force would do her no good, employ'd Mildness and Caresses to gain him; but the Earle being well acquainted with the Crafts of Women, us'd his opportunities, took some times his pleasure, and derided Matrimony: Nevertheless the Lady *Margaret* had pretenders good store, who were drawn more by their Ambition, because of the Empire she had over the Duke, then by any other Motive; whil'st she minded nothing more then the enjoying her pleasures at full liberty, which she could only do by getting a Husband quickly; but a Husband of her own chusing, fit for the purpose; that is to say, a good honest Man, and one as the *Italian* sayes,



*Un gran cog, &c.* — The Mother and Daughter both jump'd in this opinion; the Mother fearing, that if her Daughter should chance to fall into the hands of some Fantastick Husband, she might lose all her authority over her; and they both together fear'd, that his ill humour might be the occasion of ruining her Favour with the Duke, and so they should be quite undone, and lose all their hopes. The Duke also was mindful of his own interest in that Affair, and consented not to the Marriage of his Mistress but upon those termes; chusing rather to possess her in that condition she was already, then lose her in another. The Dutchess, on her side, considering the Interest of State, the conservation of the House of *Gonzague*, and for the general satisfaction of her Subjects, looking upon the Duke as the onely prop of her Family, desir'd, and sought nothing more then to see this Lady *Margaret* Married away; fearing, least the Duke might, losing himself in this extreame ridiculous Love for her, think of Marrying her himself: At that time there came to *Casal* the Earl of

*Rovera,*

*Rovera*, a man made for their purpose, and made as such a man should be; he he was born at *Savona*, and descended from that noble Family of *Rovera*, which has given to the Church those two famous Popes *Sixtus* the fourth, and *Julius* the second. The humour of this Lord was very peaceable and retired, not caring to see any body but those of his old acquaintance. In fine, he was a true Ball for these Ladies to toss, and such a one as the Duke, the mother and daughter all desired; and to speak him in one word, he was of a humour to let them do what they pleas'd, and go were they had a mind to; and though he was not a man of great Learning, yet he was for all that, a man of very good sense, and his wit was capable of serving him better than his Language.

The design of this Earl had been to pass his Life in a single condition, if the solicitations of the Duke and the Lady *Margaret* (who was resolv'd not to let slip this occasion) had not alter'd his resolutions, and from the first day he made her a visit, put him into a condition of not being able to live one day

day without seeing her: Whil'st they were treating of this marriage, the Lady *Margaret*, to try whether the Earl were of a jealous humour, pretended one day (as he sat musing by himself in her Chamber) that the Duke had sent for her to play at Cards with him, so that she should be oblig'd to stay there with her mother till the next day; and to perswade the Earl absolutely to believe the Duke loved her passionately, She told him, That the Duke loving her as he did, she could do no less than to satisfy him in all things that depended upon her: but the Earl not understanding her, or at least, pretending not to know her meaning, onely answer'd, She would do very well to serve his Highness, and so went away.

One of the nearest kindred to the Earl, hearing of this intended marriage, went to him with design to speak freely to him concerning it as a Friend, and told him, he ought to think more than once upon what he was going to do, and that he should seriously consider, (before he proceeded any further) upon the love between the Duke and the Lady *Margaret*; but the Earl answer'd,  
Matri-

Matrimony will break that Friendship. That same Friend of his indeavour'd to prove the contrary to him by a hundred reasons, but could get no other answer from him (after he had thank'd him kindly for his advice) but this, The horns that are grafted by a Prince do not sit heavy upon the head. Two days after another of his Friends told him openly, that for his part he would not marry that young Lady for any thing in the world, because that as long as the Duke lived, he could not refrain from being jealous, and should assuredly die a Cuckold. This second advice amaz'd the Earl a little, yet he said onely that he believed nothing of all these reports. In the mean time this renewed advice wrought such an effect, that he went not to see his Mistress in two days, but love being stronger, he could not refrain from visiting her again, so great was his desire to marry her and make her his dear half.

The Duke seem'd to take no notice of all these Passages, (though they made a noise great enough,) but waited till the Earl spoke to himself about it, which he at last did, at the solicitation  
of

of the mother, who let him know that her house had been always protected by his Highness, and her daughter in particular, to whom the Duke had always expressed much friendship, and she could do nothing without his Highness consent and approbation. The Earl answer'd her presently, That all Gentlemen were as much oblig'd to this duty, and that they were not wont to marry without they were certain of the Princes assent, and therefore it was his duty to do the same thing; after this reply he parted from her to go to the Duke, that old Lady having promis'd him to do the like in behalf of her daughter. The Earl had scarce began his complement to the Duke concerning his marriage with the Lady *Margaret*, when the Duke interrupted him to speak to him advantageously of her Family and her Person, assuring the Earl of his affection and protection in all things; and to let him see how much he approv'd of this marriage, he told him with a great demonstration of love, that he was certain that one or both could not but be happy, since it was impossible for him to find a more excellent



lent woman nor more worthy of such a husband, nor for her to find a husband more worthy of such a wife. The Earl after he had paid his respects and deserv'd thanks to the Duke, said to him, I marry the Lady *Margaret*, because she is protected by your Highness. To which the Duke presently replyed, laughing, We will love the Lady *Margaret*, and we will love her until death, having been brought up together from the beginnings of our life. The Duke after he had discours'd a long time with the Earl concerning the particularities of this wedding, took him by the hand, and said to him, Go, my Lord, you will gather a Flower, worthy of such a *Revera*. My Tree (said the Earl) wants a Flower which comes from the hands of your Highness. This marriage then concluded to the satisfaction of the interested parties, they received all the Complements, and made their Balls and Feasts *a la mode de France*, which had been masters of *Casal* more then fifteen years, and had so well establish'd the French Liberty in that Town to the delight of the inhabitants, that they resolv'd to keep it for ever; and it is  
certain,

certain, that if they were to change their master, they would accept of no other but the most Christian King; so well do they remain satisfied with the French Nation, which is a thing extraordinary in *Italy*, where they are commonly so much hated, though the *Italians* can give no reason for their aversion to those People: For it is most certain, that in those Places of *Italy* where any of the French inhabit, they bring in one moneth more profit to that place, than the *Spaniards* afford them in ten year. The Duke, although invited to this wedding, could not resolve upon any consideration, to see his Lady *Margaret* given away, to whom he writ this Letter.

## My Heart,

**I**F I thought that thy Marriage would deprive me of those Priviledges I have hitherto enjoyed with thee, for certain I should rejoyce very little at it, but I do rejoyce, because I assure my self thou marriest with a resolution to give thy Husband but the leavings of our love:  
here-

*heretofore we have been forc'd to do all things secretly to hide them from all the world; but from this day we shall find it more easie to conceal our actions from onely one man; give him the appearances, but do thou be sure to keep thy heart for me, and remember that I am wholly thine,*

**Charles.**

The Duke let slip no occasion of being present at all the Balls that were presented to the Bride in several places; and one day he was in a dress that disguised him so much, that he had never been discovered but by his great Familiarity with the Bride. The Duke having taken notice of a Diamond upon the Bridegrooms finger in the fashion of a Heart, which himself had given his Lady *Margaret*, when she was a maid, and was esteemed worth a thousand Crowns, was so extreemly angry to see the Earl wear it, that he resolv'd to go away from *Casal* without speaking to her, but she having smokt him, us'd all her endeavour to appease him, and bring him back again, protesting

testing he was in a mistake, to believe she had given that Ring to her Husband, which she esteem'd so much for his Highness sake, as the pledge of his affection, that it was more dear to her than any thing in the world. The Duke softened by her tears, dried them up, not with a handkercher, but with his kisses, and after that staid in her Chamber with her for some hours that day.

The wedding was kept with so great pomp and magnificence, that there wanted nothing but the publick presence of the Duke, who though he refus'd to appear there in person, yet to shew how much he honour'd them, he sent the Bride a Medal of gold, in which was a Daizy, (which signifies *Margaret*) set round with twelve Diamonds, and two Chains of great value, which he accompanied with this note,

*I advise thee to be cautious in the captivating thy self, and consider, if thou art a prisoner to two persons, it will not be easie to cheat both thy keepers,*

The love of the Duke to the  
Countess

Countess seem'd after this wedding to grow by little and little something cool, but it was but a feigned coldness: For he often found his opportunities of entertaining her in private during his stay at *Casal*. The Earl us'd all the art he was capable of to surprize his wife in her private conferences with the Duke, but in vain; so that at last he began to believe she had been slander'd; and so rested in peace, giving her all kind of Liberty; who had wit enough to make the right use of it, and contented the Husband in publick, and the Gallant in private; but since now the Time and Necessity of the State seem'd to demand a Successour to the Duke, so to conserve that rich Patrimony still in the same House where it had long continued, and there being no other branch left of the house of *Gonzague* but himself; The whole State begun now to think in good earnest of marrying him to some Princess worthy of so great a Prince, many matches were propos'd, but heaven, that ordinarily takes care of making marriages, ordain'd the Archduchess *Isabella Clare*, a Princess worthy of a Crown, to be this Dukes

E                      wife,



wife, and should by her Life and Patience adde a new lustre to the house of *Gonzague*; some other woman perhaps would have brought the same disorder into that house (and it may be a worse) than that which the house of *Lorraine* experimented in the love which the Duke *Charles* of *Lorraine* express'd for the Countess of *Cantecroy*, to the prejudice of that affection which he owed to his wife *Nicola*. The Duchess, who notwithstanding all the indifference which she saw in her husband towards her, she express'd not the least jealousy of the Countess, and although she saw in a little time her husband absolutely estranged from her, and engag'd altogether in the love of that woman, yet she look'd no less kindly upon the Duke her husband, even whilst the Countess endeavoured to keep him from her by all the wayes possible, having writ this Letter to him, notwithstanding she knew his Marriage with the Duchess was concluded.

Great

Great Prince,

*Am not ignorant that the marriage of your Highness with the Archduchess Isabella Clare, will bring an increase to our Family, a glory to your State, and a comfort to your servants, but as fast as the joy of possessing so great a Prince does grow in the heart of the Archduchess, that of my heart will diminish in the loss I am to suffer, of a heart that was alwayes the object of my love, and all my desires: I hope your Highness will pardon me for writing to you in this manner, but in the condition I am in of losing what I adore, I can be no longer any thing else but an extravagant without conduct or reason; but if your Highness has been pleased to honour me hitherto by loving me as a Friend; I desire you will at least continue your grace and favour to me in loving, for the time to come, as your most humble servant*

Margaret.

The Duke, who lov'd the Countess above his own reputation, after he had read her Letter two or three times over, sighing, in the presence of a brother of hers who brought it to him, tore it, after he had answer'd it, with much tenderness in these words,

## Countess,

**A**LL Princes are accustomed to marry themselves more by reason of State than Love; so they love their wives more by reason of State than affection. If the interest of my house does not oblige me to marry, nothing should hinder me from being alwayes single, whose I shall be, in despite of all that would oppose it; and since thou hast deceiv'd thy husband to content me, why cannot I deceive my wife for thy satisfaction? trouble thy self for nothing and love thy

Charles

Although

Although the furious warres in the  
 ear 1629. had very much exhausted  
 the treasure of that State, yet the  
 Duchess in this time of the marrying  
 of her son spar'd for no cost, to render  
 the very splendid and magnificent; all  
 the Ladies of Honour that had liv'd in  
 that Court were invited to make the  
 entry of the new Princess into *Mantua*  
 more glorious. There was none ex-  
 cepted in that invitation but the  
 Countess, who the Duchess would not  
 invite to that Ceremony, for some rea-  
 sons, which, mortification to the  
 Countess she soon after complain'd of  
 to the Duke, and her resentment was  
 heightened by her being, as it were,  
 banish'd from the Court in a time  
 when the Earl her husband had re-  
 ceiv'd one of the chiefest Employments  
 for the Ceremony of that Entry; of  
 which place he very well acquitted  
 himself to the Contentment of the  
 Duke his master: yet notwithstanding  
 all this, the Countess would go to  
*Mantua*, and adorn'd her self with all  
 the gallantries that fine Ladies take at  
 those times to set themselves off at  
 Court, whither she went to see the

new Duchefs, where at laft the Duchefs  
 mother to the Duke, gave her leave to  
 ftay to take part in the divertizement  
 of the Balls, which were given there  
 for many dayes together. The firft  
 great Ball pafs'd without the Duke  
 feeming to take any notice of his Lady  
*Margaret*; and although there was  
 more of Prudence than coldnefs of af-  
 fection in this carriage of his, yet the  
 Countefs could hardly refrain from ex-  
 preffing thofe figns of anger and  
 jealoufie which feiz'd upon her heart  
 imagining that the Duke fatisfied with  
 the beauty and carreffes of his Bride  
 began to neglect her charms, which  
 had fo long captivated him; ſhe omit-  
 ted no opportunity of fpeaking to the  
 Duke, who underftood her, and yet  
 avoided talking with her, though he  
 did not forget to caufe her to be taken  
 out to dance as well as the other Ladies  
 of Quality, to whom Princes always  
 apply themfelves to do them chief ho-  
 nour at thofe times. But this politic  
 difsimulation of the Dukes cold car-  
 riage to the Countefs continued but a  
 little while: for before ſhe return'd to  
*Cafal* with her husband, his Highnefs  
 would



would see her, and discours'd with her, above an hour in private. I know not in what place they met, but the Marquess of *Arrigone* passing by the place where the Duke and she were talking, and perceiving them together, Your Highness (said he) goes back to the *Sicut erat*, before you begin the Psalm.

The Countess went away very well satisfied, after this conference with the Duke, which made it believ'd that his Highness confirm'd the protestations of his constancy to her; but it was impossible for her husband to discover the reason of that great joy which was in her face at their return to *Casal*.

These beginnings of the Dukes Marriage, though they pass thus coldly, yet it was not to be imagin'd that it would continue so long; although it is true, that the Thoughts and Affaires of Princes dispenses them in some sort from the ordinary practisers of inferiour People: and, most People imagine, the Prince has perform'd his duty well enough, if he has got his Wife with Child; nevertheless, this Duke *Charles*, whether it were through the

tenderness of his Age, having scarce yet arrived to his one and twentieth year; or through some other reason, he ceased not for three moneths together to Caresse the Dutchess his Wife with all sort of kindness; not only before his familiar Friends, but also in the presence of the *Embassadors* themselves, which was a great contentment to the Dutchess his Mother: but 3 Moneths after that, some business at *Montferrat*, or, as it is conjectur'd, the Love to the Countess, who desir'd him impatiently, or as some perswaded themselves, to leave the Dutchess at repose, obliged the Duke to go to *Casal*; This Voyage a little alter'd the Dukes Affection to the Dutchess his Wife, if one may give the name of Affection to a Love so newly planted, whose Rootes were yet but small and tender; the sight of the Countess made him forget his Wife: and, it was observ'd, he had never taken so great a delight in Caressing of the Dutchess, as he took onely in speaking with the Countess: but, because the presence of the Husband was an Obstacle to their pleasures, he found out a way by a pretence of business

ness to send him to *Mantua*: The Earle, who had from the first night of the Dukes arriving at *Casal*, taken better notice of some passages he was troubled to discover, began then to believe, what till then he had but suspected; nevertheless he must go by his Prince's Command, without shewing any repugnance for that journey: but, at his return, he receiv'd an account of all had passed from a waiting Maid, to whom he had made great promises of Reward, with Oaths to perform them, to be a faithful Spy for him, of what pass'd between the Duke, and his Wife, in his absence; she promis'd the Earle, to give him an exact Account; but, it was not very difficult for her (the Countess not mistrusting her) to find out the most private passages for this intelligence. The Earle had foolishly believed, that all the Dukes Love had no other Conclusion but Playing at Cards, and perhaps some little *French* Freedomes with his Wife; imagining, that her Brothers and Kindred, that were interested in the same reputation, would have prevented any further ill; but he deceiv'd himself; For, they were

were of the opinion he himself had at first declar'd, (that the Hornes Graft-ed by a Prince did not sit uneasily upon the Head) and were so far from watching the Actions of the Duke, and their Kinswoman, to prevent the shame of their House, that they were very officious to bring them together, and serving the Dukes Loves with all imaginable care and diligence; and the chiefe amongst them in this imployment, was he, whom the Duke had lately made Master of the Artillery at *Casal*; it was he that convey'd by night his Sister into the Dukes Chamber, and most commonly kept the Door, watching with the Male that was to carry back his Sister to her own Lodging, when she had pleasur'd the Duke: In truth this Amour grew very strong in this last Journey; the one began to hate her Husband, to satisfie her Gallant; the other, to despise his Wife, to give himself intirely to his Friend; and this was plainly perceiv'd by what happened after the Dukes return to *Manhua*; where he discover'd (to the great astonishment of all the World) that he was Cloyed of his Wife: No body being

ing able to imagine, how a young Prince could possibly be weary so soon of a young Princess, who also was newly prov'd with Child, to the great Joy of the whole Court; whilst in the mean time that chaste Dove knew not what to think of a Husband so young who express'd so little Love to her; and nevertheless, although her Grief at it was great, yet her Prudence was greater; so that she pretended not to see that which she but too much discover'd: The Earle, which the Duke had taken order to send away to *Mantua*, was commanded not to stir from thence till his Highness return'd, which he obey'd; and the Duke was no sooner arriv'd in the Town, but he sent him back to his own House, where his Curiosity cost him dear, and gave him no small Mortification; the Servant he had employ'd to watch, having given him the whole Relation of all that had past between the Duke and his Wife: the shame and confusion of this poor Man is not to be express'd, when he learnt the circumstances of this Impudent Love countenanc'd by the baseness of his Wives own Brothers; and although he



he seem'd to take no notice of what he too well knew, nor hearkned to the Discourses of his Friends upon that Chapter; yet, he could not imagine, that the Crimes of his Wife, and his own misfortune was so publick: his melancholly grew to that height, that he saw not any body that Saluted him in the Streets; and he fancyed every minute, that People were making Hornes at him behind his back: The Countess, who had a good Nose, smelt out the reason of the Change in her Husbands Humour, and redoubled her Caresses to him; fearing, least this jealousie which he appear'd so insensible of before his Marriage, might produce some unhappy effect; for, it is certain, that had she known him to be of a jealous humour, she would never have Married him.

In the mean time, as the Earle and his Countess walked one evening after Supper upon the Town Walls, the Earl ask'd his Wife, Did his Highness waite upon you often? As he was wont, reply'd she; (seeing to what end he spoke it:) And, What did you do together, said the Earle: to which, she answer'd,  
The

The same that you did with the *Dutchess* at *Mantua*. Thus they both rallied one another. The Husband perceiving what it was to have such a Wife, and the wife lamented the trouble of having such a Husband: yet nevertheless the Earles jealousies had some intermissions, his Melancholly often giving place to his Joy; so that his Wife, and Brothers in-Law felt some time the effects of the one, and then of the other. Whil'st these things pass'd in the Year 1652, the *Dutchess* was brought to bed of a Son, which is now the onely Prop of the House of *Gonzague*; the Consolation of his Mother; the Glory and Hope of the State, to which he gives great hopes, promising very much, shewing himself a great and brave Prince, and expressing aversion for an idle lazy life; and, on the contrary, a great inclination for all the exercises of Warr: It is believed, that since the Birth of that young Prince, the Duke convers'd not with the *Dutchess* as his Wife; the reason of this opinion is his assiduous love to the Countess, as also because the *Dutchess* has not been with Child from that time.

This

This indifference of the Duke towards the Dutchesse was also imputed to two other causes; the first, to her Natural coldness; the other, to I know not what strange devise of the Countess: the last scarce is doubted of, for, as report has said, this Woman fearing to lose the Dukes Friendship after his Marriage, and seeking to enjoy alone a good, without which she despis'd all others, resolv'd to tempt all wayes to prevent that, which she thought an obstacle to her design; to that end, having told her thoughts to one of her Sisters, she, by her meanes, became acquainted with a certain Magician, who dwelt at *St. Sauveur*, near to *Casal*; the Countess went to him, and obtain'd some words from him; That he bid her be confident she should enjoy the Dukes Friendship alone: but, because this Sorcerer was of an intelligence with a certain Religious Dominican, that Lady gain'd him by his meanes; she rewarding him, by not refusing him the satisfaction he requir'd of her: so, after that this Charme succeeded so well by the help of this Reverend Father, that by their Diabolical Inventions, the Duke

Duke had that knot tyed, usually so fatal to Marriage: Others have believ'd that this was a false report, and that this Witchcraft took no effect, but that the Duke made it a pretext to avoid the Dutcheſs, whom he lov'd not; and devote himſelf to the Counteſs, whom he ador'd, in which there is no likelihood: For, let any body imagine how it can be poſſible for a young Prince to live in the company of his Wife without touching her, if there had not been ſome reaſon diabolical, or ſupernatural to hinder him: ſo, that it muſt certainly be believ'd, that the Counteſs did bewitch the Duke.

The old Dutcheſs, troubled at the Dukes infirmity, told him he ſhould make uſe of ſome ſpiritual or natural remedies to cure him, but (what was very ſtrange) he laugh'd at her advice, which made people believe that it was done by his own conſent.

It has been ſaid that that natural coldneſs of the young Dutcheſs, compar'd to the Conſtitution (ſo contrary) of the Counteſs, contributed very much for the ſmall affection he had for her; but how could the Dutcheſs leave  
off

off that purity so rare and commendable, which she had alwayes made the ornament of her life, to comply with the Dukes desires, and which he found in another? There is no doubt but that she lov'd as much as any other woman could do, but with a sincere, true and real love, for to say truth, she was not in the number of those that onely made a shew of love, but she lov'd her husband from the bottom of her heart; so that all her affection was within, having not those little foolish fondnesses which some other wives study with so much affectation to shew their loves: In a word, her affection was truly great, though she did not make shew of it; but to clear all this, I think it to some purpose to say something by the way, to discover what the Dukes inclinations were naturally, and also of that of the Countess *Margaret*.

All men naturally take great delight in the Caresses they receive; it is certain that the Duke was more inclin'd to that satisfaction than any man; so that it may almost be said, that weakness was a fault of nature in him who



who so desired to be courted by the women, without which, it is thought, the Duke would have been insensible for them; they say that this inclination of the Dukes was caus'd by the Conversation of the Ladies of the Court, amongst whom he was brought up, and spent most of his youth, having alwayes been caress'd by one or other of those Ladies that waited on his Mother, who lov'd nothing more than to see the women make much of him, and to be under the conduct of that sex, and particularly the Lady *Margaret*, who had so us'd him to her carresses, that he could not think of carressing his wife, if he were not prepar'd by hers, which is a thing that seldom happens, but what the one could not do, the other was perfect in, and exercis'd her art so to the humour of the Duke, that he could not defend himself from her Charms, though he had a mind to it, also the Countess was liberal enough of her Courtships to him, mov'd rather by ambition to domineer and govern the Duke, than by any sentiment of nature, which is believ'd by the little care she took to

court her husband at that rate, and certainly the very *Sirenes* and *Circes* were never capable of more inticements and flattering carresses than she us'd to please the Duke.

See here the poison of this Marriage, see here the Fall of the Dukes reputation; a Princess too modest and little sensible of Carresses, and a Prince too desirous of those kind of Charms, and on the other side, a woman experienc'd in all the crafts of Love, to gain the heart of this Prince, and take it from the Princess, and it is stedfastly believ'd, that if the Princess had been of her rivals humour, the Duke would have lov'd her as well as he lov'd the Countess, and had been as good a Husband as he was a Lover; and that if the Countess had not understood the way of treating him in another manner than the Duchess did, without doubt he would have had no greater a Complaisance for her; but yet it was better for the Princess to be as she was, than to be of the humour of her rival: In the mean time, it is easie to be believ'd, that the excessive carresses which the Countess made to  
that

that Duke made him not only hate the Duchess, in the way of Matrimony, but also to abhorre Marriage it self for her sake: for to justifie this opinion, he was quite contrary to the custome of other Princes, who delight in change; for he could indure to see no other woman but the Countess, and it is certainly reported, that except his wife, he never touch'd any other woman but the Countess, who was his ordinary Meal every day, and his Feast also; however one day he was angry at her for something, he to vex her sent for a young very pretty woman of the town of *Casal*, and because in that rencounter there happened a very pleasant passage, I think it necessary enough to mention it in this place in few words: This young Maid liv'd in a house on the back-side of the Church of the *Augustin* Fathers in a street great enough, the Duke having often pass'd that way with the Countess, fail'd not to look upon her still being at the door on purpose to be seen by the Duke; This happened a little after the depart of the Earl in his voyage to *Poland*, the Duke rather

to laugh than for any other design, seeing this young woman, us'd to say to the Countess, That wench is handsomer than thou art; It is true. said the Countess, (peek'd with jealousy) but she has fewer charmes, therefore I don't fear that she will deprive me of your love. which is apter to be taken with agreeableness than beauty; but what pleasure does your Highness take to break my head with jealousy?

One night when the Duke was angry at her, or counterfeited himself so, to vex the Countess, to trouble her brains yet more, he sent word to that young woman by one of the Grooms of his Chamber, (who was the same that us'd to wait upon the Countess to his Chamber at night in the Castle) that he would speak with her, and that he should expect her after Supper. Her mother, who understood this mystery, said to the Messenger, The words of his Highness cannot but produce great grace to my Daughter, who is wholly at his service.

The hour come, the Groom of the Chamber went to execute the Orders of his Master, and to conduct this young

young Maid into his Chamber, (I will not say into the bed) but the Countess, being inform'd by the same man, who was her kinsman and a very good friend of hers, ran presently to the Palace, where having found that Prey, without taking notice of any thing, ran to the Dukes appartement, and presented herself to the Duke, to make him change his resolutions, who being made tender by her carresses, he cast himself into her arms, whilst the Groom of the Chamber, too crafty to loose so good an occasion, conducted the young woman, which he had brought, into his own Chamber, where he made her stay and lye with him, so that she saw herself constrain'd to receive from the man what she expected from the master. In the mean time her mother, taking hold on this occasion, bragg'd every where that her daughter had great Familiarities with the Duke, to whom nevertheless she had not so much as spoke a word. The Duke being with his well-beloved, was in some apprehensions that the Groom of his Chamber might surprize them with that young wench he had sent for, but



he found afterwards that all things were carried very well. The Countess of her side, reproached the Duke very much for his lightness and the injustice he did her in going about to change a love which he had experienc'd so long, for one that was so new, and besides, which was not worth the trouble. The Duke excus'd himself, saying, All that was but in jest, and to make her jealous, from whom he receiv'd those delights anew, which ordinarily is found in the reconcilements of Lovers. But, said the Countess, what did that young Wench do in your Palace. The Duke quickly replyed, That if she were come thither, it was for his *valet de Chambre*, and not for him. Your Highness then (said the Countess) serves the Loves of your *valet de Chambre*. Thus the pleasures banish'd the suspicions, and the peace was concluded without much pain.

In the mean time, the young Duchess, too well inform'd of this unruly life, the Duke led with the Countess *Margaret*, could not defend her heart from suffering all those torments which an honest and virtuous wife usually feels upon such an occasion.

sion. She made some tell the Duke  
 her Husband of it, desiring him to stop  
 the Course of that disorder, which  
 was his shame, and the scandal of his  
 people: Her Prudence made her con-  
 ceal her grief, and her Vertue oblig'd  
 her to stifle those reproaches she might  
 have made to the Dukes infidelity,  
 which would draw upon him the ha-  
 tred and scorn of other Princes;  
 amongst whom at that time there was  
 not heard of the like. The Duke could  
 not hear the lawful reproaches of his  
 wife the Duchess without being touch'd  
 with the remorse of his crime; but if  
 he set before his eyes the wrong and  
 injury which he did to the goodness  
 and fidelity of his wife, he faild not al-  
 so to represent to himself how little it  
 was in his power to leave off loving  
 the Countess. Thus the mortification  
 which he receiv'd from the reproaches  
 was made to him served to no other  
 end but to put him into a condition of  
 not knowing which side to take; he  
 knew his crime, but he could not hate  
 the cause; and it was impossible for  
 him to banish out of his soul his love  
 to the Countess, to place the Duchess

in her room ; and although he wanted love for his wife, yet he wanted not reason to know his disorder ; so that he sought to sweeten the just resentments of the Duchess by all kind of submissions, in which he let the world see that he was very well skill'd in saving (as 'tis said) both the Cabbage and the kid, people wonder'd how he could so well both please his wife and his Mistress, and how it came to pass that the deceived Duchess remain'd better satisfied than did the Countess, who effectually receiv'd from his Highness all kind of satisfaction, who wanted nothing that she could desire from him ; but it was to be wish'd that the Duchess could have also the same pretensions that the Countess had.

All that the Duke and the Countess did had no other end but to seek out wayes to enjoy one another more often, which happen'd as they wish'd. The one studied to deceive her Husband, and the other his Wife: But to speak truth, the Countess found it a harder task to cheat her Husband, than the Duke found in deceiving the Duchess his Wife : for this poor unfortunate  
 Lady

Lady perceiving that this was an incurable evil and desperate, by a great Prudence shut her eyes almost, that she might not see the disorders of her Husband ; whil'st on the other side the Earl watch'd his wife, the more that he saw her give her self up to the love of the Duke, to her great dishonour and loss of her own reputation, and he had just reason for doing so: for since they were not asham'd to act their worthy affairs almost before all the world, notwithstanding all the diligence of the Earl to watch them ; what would they not have done, if he had winkt at their excellent Carriage?

If these two Lovers had been contented to do all in secret, the Earl had not been much disquieted, nor had he taken what they did into his consideration, but had rather, would have seem'd to have receiv'd some satisfaction in the hopes of being well us'd by the Duke, and to have receiv'd honours from him in the sight of the world: For all his great trouble arose from the publick scandal, and the opinion he had conceiv'd, that every body fancied he complied with these  
 amours,

amours, and thus it made him sick at heart, to be counted not onely a base man, but an infamous voluntary Cuckold, and publickly to be despis'd as such a person: He never reflected upon the Nobility of his House, descended originally from great Princes, who had alwayes liv'd honourably, and had maintain'd themselves for many years by a very advantageous reputation, without ever receiving any stain; but those reflections made him repent he had married a wife, whose carriage so much dishonour'd that illustrious Family of his; and the good fame his Predecessours had acquired by their honest Lives; his anger kindled a thousand times in his heart the desire of revenge, but the fear of some thing worse happening to him, and to loose not onely his fortune but also his life, stifled all those thoughts in him. Shall I say furthermore, the apprehension of a sad end and an untimely death hinder'd him often from complaining to his wife of her wicked Carriage of her self; He durst not, I say, correct her in secret, or to threaten her, fearing that, she being warn'd by that, might procure



cure to him a violent death in revenge  
 to his upbraids of her: so that he was  
 often forc'd to pretend as if he had  
 not seen those passages he saw too  
 plainly, and to be ignorant of what he  
 knew too well. But in fine, not being  
 able to indure any longer a vexation  
 that grew every moment, press'd with  
 grief and shame, he resolv'd to go to  
*Savona*, to ask Counsel of his Parents,  
 what course to take to deliver himself  
 from a misfortune which was so cruel  
 to him and so great: and he had scarce  
 acosted them, when one amongst them  
 reproach'd him of marrying a wife  
 whether they would or no, who was  
 the daughter of an unchast mother,  
 the sister of a whore, and whose own  
 honour was suspected then when he  
 would so obstinately resolve to marry  
 her, and her life since has prov'd what  
 she was then. The poor Earl, extream-  
 ly mortified with these reproaches,  
 could make no other answer, but that  
 he never thought things would come  
 to this pass; his Parents nevertheless  
 not to leave him in this Sea of Con-  
 fusion counsell'd him after they had  
 comforted him a little, that he should  
 try

try to remove his wife from *Casal* calmly and with Gentleness, to bring her to *Savona*, and there resolve to settle and live out the remainder of his days in his own Country.

This Earl tryed the way of following this good Counsel, believing for certain that absence would cool this love, and that time would make him forget what at the present was such a heart-breaking to him, and caus'd him so much shame; being then return'd to *Casal*, he begun to try if he could work this miracle upon his wife, but all his indeavours were in vain; he told her his Parents desir'd her company very passionately amongst them, that the Ladies of that Town desir'd impatiently to injoy her company, to render her all the service and respect they thought due to her; he also prayed her to consider how advantageous the Promises of that Republick were to him of making him a great man, by the considerable employments they would give him, and that she should assure herself he would spare no cost to give her all sort of contentments, and to that end he was resolv'd to purchase a little  
but

but fair Lordship hard by the Sea-side, where in the Summer-time they would divert themselves together, by all the agreeable divertisements futable to persons of their condition. In fine, to conclude in a word, he gave her many other politick and moral reasons, so strong and plausible, that they would have been powerful enough to have convinc'd any body but her self: but the good Countess did nothing but laugh at this discourse, and without flattering him any further, told him plainly, That she was not of an humour to quit her own for a strange purchase, the certain for the uncertain, and that which she was really possess'd of for a picture and shadow, that she had not married her self at *Casal* with intention to dwell at *Savona*, that the contract of her marriage had made no mention of this change, and that he could by nothing in the world find a lawful excuse to make her change her own Country; and if he pleas'd he might desire to see his own Relations at *Savona*, but as for her she would rather stay in the Company of her brothers at *Casal*, and after all she assur'd him

him it was loss of time to dream of that, because she was confident his Highness would never consent to their parture, and yet to depart without his consent it was blindly to precipitate her ruine, and thus the Earl was constrain'd to desist from his enterprize, and saw himself oblig'd to arm himself with a new patience. The Countess the whilest judging by these words, that he had a design to retire her from her Lover; imagining besides, that her Husband had prepar'd for her at *Savona* some of those Morfels which the *Italians* ordinarily give to their wives in the like Cases, as it often happens in *Italy*; which made her seek an opportunity to speak to the Duke, and having easily found him, as she wish'd, she having the Liberty to go and come to him at all hours, after she had acosted him and made her curtsie, she told him at length the whole story of her Husbands designes, not forgetting his very words in a manner, that shew'd how angry she was at her Husband. This resolution of his extremely displeas'd the Duke, who lookt upon the Earl as very little politick,

politick, and not at all prudent, and thought it very strange that for a foolish trifle (for he lookt upon the making a man a Cuckold nothing else) he would hazard the loss of his favour in retiring from his service, he was of opinion that the honours he conferr'd on the Earl was satisfaction enough for the honour he took from him, and that he had done him Favour great enough in making him one of the most considerable of his Court, which he had not done upon any consideration in the world, but for the Love he had for the Countess.

But if the Earl consulted his Parents at *Savona*, to carry the Countess thither out of *Casal*, the Duke and she consulted at *Casal* against him, and sought out Pretences to absent in good earnest that obstacle of their delights from them: for it was every day a new work, and every time that this Lover came to *Casal* he was in trouble to invent some new pretext to be rid of him, to the end that he might supply his place with the Countess, and divert themselves with more Liberty; But the Duke came so often



to *Casal*, and was so often put to his shifts to find out new pretexts of dismissing the Earl out of the way, that he was now at the bottom of his scowl; and his invention being tyred, he knew not what to do next: these Lovers propounded many wayes to one another, whereof one was to shoot him privately with a Musquet, and pretend afterwards that the blow came from some of his enemies; but the Prince could not hearken to this resolution, not being willing, after the example of *David*, to add murther to his adultery, not being assured that he should repent as he did; besides, the Countess her self was not of a nature ever to give her consent to any actions of cruelty, the least in the world; or any that thus was an offence to the Holiness of Matrimony, notwithstanding the heat that appear'd in her first motions and passion against her husband. They had already sent him to *Rome*, twice to *Florence*, as many times to *Venice*, and I know not how many times to *Turin* and *Genes*. The Duke at last would send him into *France*, in the quality of an Ordinary Embassadour, but

but there were two obstacles that hindered that, The hate and aversion the Earl ever bore to the French Nation, was one, and indeed his declared aversion to them was so unreasonable, that he was us'd to say in all Companies where he came, that if he had the Keyes of Hell but one day, he would with his whole heart send all the Frenchmen thither, even to the Devils Palace, because they had corrupted the City of *Casal*, and by the introduction of their Liberty had so chang'd that Town *en bordeau*. Thus it appear'd not reasonable to the Duke to send such a man to treat with them. In the second place, that which hindered the Earl from being sent Embassadour into the Court of *France*, was, The Fear the Duke had he would cary his wife along with him, (as assuredly he had done,) and the Duke refusing to let her go, would have disoblig'd him too much, and given cause to an apparent scandal, and therefore this Proposition took no effect, and ended just where it begun, as unprofitable to their design; but the resolution was certainly taken to dismiss the Earl one way or other;

if not for ever, yet for a great while; but they endeavour'd to find out ways for their satisfaction that would suit with the glory of the Husband and honour of the Wife, which they lookt upon chiefly in this design. As for the absenting of her brothers, there was no thought of that; for they were very merry and well contented to see their Sister in the Dukes good graces, and envied one another, who should most contribute to the pleasures of the Duke and their Sister. The profit they receiv'd was so great by it, besides the considerable charges conferr'd upon them for their service in that trade; in truth those Gentlemen might well enough dissemble their trouble, to see their Sister live so disorder'd a life, and content themselves more easily to be the procurers of horns; since that office was not so great a dis-reputation to them as it was to the Earl that was the Husband, who was to endure not onely the publike knowledge of his dishonour, the injuries and reproaches of all the world, but also the pride and ill humour of his wife in his house, without daring to take notice of his  
being

being sent away from her, so often, whole weeks and moneths, which was insupportable to him: therefore it must not be wonder'd, if the Earl was weary of that life, as well as the Duke was of seeking out excuses to send him abroad, to enjoy his wife with more Liberty, who at last thought of a way very fit for his design.

There is in the Kingdom of *Poland* a Marquess of *Gonzagne*, very much esteem'd by all the people in that Countrey, who although they are not of the same line of the Dukes of *Mantua*, yet carry the same name, and arms, and are own'd by the Dukes of *Mantua* as kinsmen in all their Letters, which they send. It is true that this kindred gives them no manner of pretence to the hereditary Succession of the Duchy of *Mantua*, and *Marquisate* of *Montferat*: for the Duke of *Mantua*, who by the Emperours consent, at first acknowledged them of kin to him, only upon this condition, That they should be excluded from all pretences of Succession to that State.

The Duke then was of opinion that he might send the Earl into *Poland*, not

so much to make a visit to that *Marquisesse* to be inform'd of the imployments, estate, and riches, and the interest they had in that Court; and to make his design hit the better, by the Earls making a longer stay in that journey than he expected, he order'd him to go not in the quality of an Ordinary Embassadour, but as a Gentleman traveller, who had no other end but to see the Countrey.

This resolution taken between the Duke and the Countess, the Earl was sent for to receive his Commission, and what else was necessary for that voyage, and to prepare himself. The Duke gave him many wicked and false reasons, the interest he had in being inform'd fully of the estate, and ranck which those Lords held in the Court of *Poland*, and told him that he had already writ Letters of Recommendation of the Earl to them; in which, he had pretended that he was onely to pass thorow that Kingdom, and had his Highness Commands to wait upon them from him, adding further, that he had willingly sent him in the quality of Embassadour to their King



King, who was his Highness's kinsman, but for his own convenience, and to save the great Charge which such an Embassie would have cost him, and also for better profiting in his design, which carried him thither, he thought it more necessary for him to go as a private Gentleman, who had a Curiosity of seeing the world, than in any other quality, because that in that Condition he could better inform himself of the estate those Lords, without suspicion.

The Earl perceiv'd very easily the Dukes design, and although he humbly acknowledg'd the Favour his Highness did him in calling him to that employment of trust; yet he could not refrain from excusing himself by telling the Duke, that such a Commission was more fit to be given to a Page, than to a man of his Quality.

The Duke who wanted neither wit nor cunning, would not receive his innumerable excuses, although I know but one which the Duke replied to, which the Duke said might have serv'd had his design been something more than a private exact information

of the Condition in which his kinsmen were at the Court of *Poland* ; upon which informations depended all his affairs with that Kingdom, which when he was satisfied of from his private voyage thither, he should then proceed to the publick Embassie to the *Polish* King, in which he made choice of him ; and to that end had given him first this private Commission, as most fit for his designs, and therefore he order'd him to go as soon as he could possibly get himself in readiness for such a Voyage ; to which the Earl gave no further reply but that he should do all in his power to be ready to serve his Highness that hour he should appoint him for this journey, in which, he plainly discover'd he had no good will for him.

In the beginning this order to go for *Poland* troubled him very much, and put a thousand Fancies in his head, and represented many things to the trouble of his soul ; but at last, after having well consider'd it, he concluded it better for him to absent himself than to stay and break his heart, by being an eye-witness of all the impudencies

of his wife with the Duke, which were come to that pass, that they made no scruple, scarce, before his face: but that kinsman of his, which I spoke of before, who was aged, and an experienc'd man in all the intrigues of Court, and therefore had so dissuaded the Earl from this Marriage, he having smelt the Dukes intention, and heard the report that the Earl was to be sent into *Poland*; as he was Elder than the Earl, so he spoke with more assurance, and without flattery told him, I see very well that horns will be very cheap. To which the Earl replyed, Cuckold for Cuckold, it is better to have horns made behind the back then before the Face.

The Earl had fifteen days given him to prepare for his Voyage, during which he took care of all things necessary for such a journey; he took leave of all his Friends, but in a manner told them that he gave them the last adieu: his brothers in law counselled him to serve his Highness with much zeal and affection; but he felt very well where his shoe wrung him, and thought within himself that all their Counsels had

no other end but, The dishonour of his wife their own Sister. In the mean time, he could so well act his part, and dissembled so well, that no body imagin'd that he went to *Poland* against his will, he appear'd so gay and pleasant; none would have believ'd, but that he made this Voyage with all the satisfaction in the world. The Countess appear'd very indifferent to all this, and seem'd to be neither well nor ill pleased at it, knowing well that all she could have said would have been distrusted, and therefore she spoke nothing to her Husband but equivocally upon that subject, being certain that he was not ignorant that in all things she had no intentions but those of pleasing the Duke; she was more than convinc'd that her Husband believ'd not one word she said to him, although she had forc'd herself to appear very much afflicted at his depart; and to express her joy she durst not, believing with reason that excess of Folly would have given too publick a scandal to the World; however she assur'd him, that the Duke intended to raise him to the highest Dignities the  
State

State and Court were capable of, and that the Service which his Highness now desir'd from him was, To open a way to greater Honours, to which he had design'd him.

The Earl then parted from *Casal* in the Moneth of *April*, accompanied by his wifes elder brother as far as *Mantua*, where after he had receiv'd his Highness orders he pass'd the Mountains, and went on his journey.

The same day the Duke dispatcht a Messenger to the Countess with this note,

## My Heart and my All!

**T**He Earl is gon this Morning for Poland, where he will do nothing, and I intend to go from hence within two dayes, to a place where I hope to do something. I shall rest contented when no body works in thy Garden, which is onely worthy the labour of Princes; excuse me if I speak so freely, do thou be mine, and for me, I shall be always thine, in spite of all those that would trouble either of us; expect me with the same desire



*desire I have to see thee, and be mine, as  
I am thine,*

**Charles.**

It will not be unnecessary in this place to conclude the story of the Earl, because we shall not henceforward have more occasions of mentioning him; I will tell you then, that he continued in *Poland* two Moneths without doing any thing; having not receiv'd all the remembrances, and instructions necessary touching his Negotiations, although the Duke had given him his word to send them to him, but it was but a Pretext, to gain time; because the Posts that went from *Mantua* to *Poland*, went lazily, and arrived there but as late as possibly they could; whil'st in the mean time the Earl knew but too well for what reason the Duke had sent him so far off, and into a place where he was oblig'd to be his own Comforter for all his Misfortunes; but what afflicted him most was, That the Duke sent him not so much as the particular Instructions, whereby he might acquit himself aright

aright of his Commission in the Court of *Poland*, and also sent him no money, without which it is impossible for strangers to do any thing, and having it, they compass any thing : and therefore at last, he writ to the Duke and also his Wife these Letters following, which he sent by *Paris* :

## Great Prince !

**I** Yet stay for those Letters of dispatch, which your Highness made me hope I should receive in this Kingdom, and yet I have not seen them, although two Moneths are pass'd since I arriv'd in this Kingdom, besides the days were spent in my journey hither ; I have much shame and confusion at being here and having no employment, not being able to serve your Highness like a true and faithful Vassal : Therefore in all humility I desire your Highness to send me with speed something to do, that I may testifie to you, with what fidelity Persons of my Quality usually serve their Sovereign, who wish all prosperity

to

*to your Highness, which you deserve,  
I am*

Your most humble  
Vassal,

The Earl of Rovera.

The other Letter which at the same time he sent to his wife was in these words,

My dear Spouse!

**I** Am so angry and so unsatisfied in being in a strange Countrey, from my own House, absent from my wife, and without money, that if I had two souls, I would willingly give one to the Devil. His Highness sent me hither with assurance that the Instructions necessary for me, and the Bills of Exchange, should certainly follow me; but seeing the contrary, I know not who to complain to, and cannot but think that I was sent hither on no design, but of being rid of me. I would  
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nevertheless flatter my self, if it were possible, with the belief that the length of the way might perhaps be the cause of the slowness of my Letters, and hinder'd them from coming so soon as I expected; but for all that I cannot but afflict my self, not being ignorant that those people, who make use of my house in my absence, divert themselves, whilst in the mean time I am suffering in the houses of others; it troubles me not to be here, but I am vext that I have not that which was promised; I pray thee sollicite his Highness, and speak to him by word of mouth, if he is at Casal, or by Letter, if he be at Mantua, that I may receive satisfaction, and the Duke may be served; till now I have not had opportunity of seeing any Lady; therefore I can say nothing to thee of their humours nor inclinations at present. This is all I can write to thee this day, deferring the rest to another opportunity. Adieu, I embrace thee.

But let the Earl write as many Letters as he pleas'd, he staid fifteen Moneths in Poland, always waiting to receive his Orders, scarce once seeing  
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in all that time the Marquess of *Gonzague*, or at least once saluting him from the Duke: he bit his fingers every day in despite of his being so cheated; he writ and writ again, but to no purpose in the world, and receiv'd no answer to all his Epistles but fair words, and to no end; which the Duke caus'd his Secretary to write, which circumstance aggravated the Earls vexation, and put him out of himself. In fine, seeing he could do nothing in that Court for the service of his Highness, and that the Duke his Master had very little business to treat of in that place, he made new requests to him, which he often repeated, for his consent to his return to *Casal*, with protestations of his being more serviceable to his Highness at *Casal* than at *Poland*, where he did nothing either for the Duke or himself, as he thought, whilst in the mean time that poor man render'd all the service required from him, since there was nothing desired from him but his absence.

The great Liberty with which these two Lovers diverted themselves together in the absence of the Earl, made them



them invent all the means possible to prolong it; and since he renewed his desires and prest so much his return, through weariness of his staying idle in the Court of *Poland*. The Duke being resolute for his absence a longer time, devised another plot worse than the former.

He ordain'd then the Earl by express Letters, That he should go to the Capitol City of *Persia*, where he pretended he should stay there some Moneths in the quality of an Embassador, because the interest of his State required some Correspondence with that King, and to engage the Earl to this, he promised him mountains and wonders, assuring him that if his designs succeeded by his Negotiation, he should want no Honours and Recompences, there being none after that such service which he might not pretend to for himself or his heirs.

The Duke sent him these Orders, with a Letter of Exhortation, and commanded also his Secretary, and his wives brothers to write to him, They obeyed the Duke, and sent to this poor banish'd man Letters full of Flatteries.

ries to animate him to the Dukes service, with all the affection imaginable, and fail'd not to aggravate to the Earl the honours which they presumed would accrew to him by this voyage.

When the Earl receiv'd this Order, one would have thought the Devil had taken him by the Coller; he eat his fingers with rage, and who ever had seen him would have thought he would also have devour'd his Letters, he begun to beat his *valet de Chamber*, to discharge some of his Choller upon him, and that which was most vexatious in this business, he was the more inflam'd by the believing his resentments so just and his extreame passion lawful, he saw plainly that the Dukes onely end was to make him die of want in that long and painful voyage, that afterwards he might enjoy his wife with greater Liberty; he could not imagine any way what affairs the Dukes of *Mantua* could have with the Kings of *Persia*, so that press'd with grief he took a resolution of sending his footman into *Italy* with the same Letters which he had received from the Duke, reserving to himself onely

only the Bills of Exchange, without giving himself the trouble to write to the Duke so much as one word of excuse, nevertheless he gave this servant of his two Letters of transport, one for his Wife, the other for his Brother in Law; The first was this,

Wicked Wife, the dishonour of my House, and the ruine of my Person,

**I** refrained hitherto those lawful reproaches I could have made to thy dissolute life, for fear of publishing those crimes, which at least ought to be concealed; but since thy impudencies go so far, as to destroy, I do not say, the quiet of my mind, (for it never tasted any since my cruel destiny joyn'd me to thee,) but that of my soul, which thou persecutest even unto the farthest places of the world. I think my self oblig'd now to let thee know, that I was never blind as thou believedst me, but if I pretended to be so, 'twas an effect of my Prudence; I complain not of the Duke who persecutes

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me

me for thy sake; I complain of thy dis-  
 loyalty to thy Husband. Why didst thou  
 marry, wicked woman as thou art, if thy  
 intentions were to be always dishonest?  
 Thou deceivedst thy self if thou didst  
 believe that at the beginnings of our  
 Marriage I did not perceive thy abomi-  
 nable amour; I knew, I saw with great  
 regret, although I counterfeited igno-  
 rance, and pretended neither to see, nor  
 hear, nor understand. It might have  
 sufficed thee to have dishonour'd me at  
 Casal, without being so cruel as to drive  
 me out of Italy. Dost thou think I be-  
 lieve that all these pretended honours are  
 conferr'd upon me for any other end, but  
 in consideration of thy impudent dishonest  
 life, to mock and abuse my simplicity?  
 I understand it well enough, and would  
 to God I did not at all. I forsake the  
 name and quality of Husband, being  
 forc'd to abandon my wife. I should be  
 the basest of men to go about to serve  
 a Prince, who flatters me with imagi-  
 nary honours, whilst in effect he dis-  
 honours me: Yes, I hope to find a hap-  
 pier Fortune in Barbary than in my na-  
 tive Countrey; and I believe that the  
 Inhabitants of that Countrey will not  
 have

have so much cruelty for me, as my Wife and my own Prince have shewed me in Italy; Yes, yes, I renounce thee for my wife, since thou wilt be a whore, and I am resolv'd to fly thy presence eternally, that the world may not believe I consent to thy disorders. I confess I need not complain of thee, because it is my self I ought to blame for all my misfortunes, having been sufficiently warned by my friends and kindred of all that I have suffer'd by thee, and the dishonour thou wouldst bring me. But in fine, since my destiny has sent this for my ruine, I run very willingly to it; and do not thou think to escape punishment, which will come upon thee one day, when thou dream'st not of it, and although the chastisements of Adulterers is, like thine, deferr'd, yet it is sure to come; go, God will revenge me, and punish thee.

He finish'd his Letter to the Countess in these words without Subscription, and sent it with another to his Brother-in-law writ in these terms,

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**T**Here is nothing I should leſſ have credited, than that Brothers born of an illuſtrious Bloud would have ſerved as Rascals in the prostitution of their own Siſter; There is no body either in Mantua or Caſal, that is ignorant of this; It is now become the Fame of your Family, and the onely thing by which it is taken notice of; but I am very much diſpleaſed to have my reputation ingaged in it; For as for yours I deride it, ſince you have been ſo baſe to offer up to the Duke what no longer belong'd to you. That opinion of yours, That Princes can make no Cuckolds, reſembles that Gold which covers Pills, to cheat ſick people. I have alwayes lookt upon it as ſuch, and I have indur'd as much as I can; but this minute that I have not gold enough left me to cover ſuch great Pills as are preſcrib'd to me, I have no more Patience, and muſt complain, ſince the Duke is pleaſed I ſhall this day begin to run over the World, like a poor Pilgrim and miſerable baniſh'd man: to the end that he may enjoy your Siſter in quiet. I reſign my wife willingly to his Highneſſ, and the ſhame to you; till now you have acted the part of Rascals, and ſerv'd the ſhame-  
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*ful desires of my wife : Now take to your selves the employment of serving your Sister. This is all shall be said to you from him that gives you absolutely his share in the shame, that you may possess it all; he flies from the company of a prostituted adulterous woman, and from the Pimps her Brothers; understand me as well as I understand both of you.*

These were the last Letters which the Earl writ to *Casal*, with which the Duke lookt upon himself so sensibly offended, having got them both into his hands, that he swore in the Countesses presence to be revenged : Many were of opinion that he was quickly after that satisfied in his vengeance he intended on the Earl, because that minute he made his Oath, he dispatch'd many Letters, giving order to follow him, and to learn what was become of him, of whom since that time there was no news heard, which was the cause so many believ'd he was kill'd by the Dukes Orders, but I cannot believe this last common opinion, because that Prince had not so black a soul; and I rather think he was satisfied

enough with ordering him to be punish'd only by sending him far enough off his State; some were of opinion that he went into *Swede*, and under a disguise chang'd his Religion and became a *Lutheran*; and some believe he lives at this day in some little place he purchas'd with those thousand Pistols which the Duke sent him by Bills of Exchange for his Voyage into *Persia*: Others pretend he has been seen in *Portugall* not five years since, which is not certified credibly. But whatever is become of him, there has not any thing been heard of him since that time, and at *Casal* there is nothing spoken of him good or bad, and therefore we will talk no more of him, but here conclude the life of that unfortunate Husband.

Let us now return to that poor Princess, almost forsaken by her husband, in all things but outward shew; who seeing her self thus treated by the Duke her Husband, for the love of an infamous woman, and one so much below her in Birth, that there is no other comparison between them to be

be made but what is given between that of a Prince and a slave; so that it was very difficult for her to hinder her self from loudly complaining of the Countess, and the more by seeing every day her husbands affection grow colder for her, and increase to that wicked woman, who alone possess'd his heart. This afflicted Duchess was desperate at all the abominable tricks which from day to day were plaid the Earl beyond the Seas, onely to leave his wife at more Liberty with the Duke; and her affliction was very much increased when she was inform'd of his despair, which had caused him to renounce absolutely the serving that Court any more, and never to return to *Casal*, nor yet into any part of *Italy*; and since she heard by the whispering murmurs of the Courtiers, that the Duke angry at this procedure of the Earl had resolv'd to pursue him in revenge where-ever he went; in pity to this poor Lord, she went to ask his pardon of the Duke, and to that effect she set before his eyes the example of *David*, driven from his Kingdom, not so much by the persecution of *Absalom*

his son, as the decree of Heaven, to punish him for Adultery, which he had committed with *Bathsheba*, and that horrid execrable and barbarous murder of *Uriah* her husband, adding, That that Prophet had not so violently persecuted *Uriah*, as his Highness had pursued the Earl; nor had liv'd so long a time in Adultery with *Bathsheba* as he had liv'd with the Countess. The Duke, angry at these solicitations, rose up from the bed where he was sitting, whilst the Duchess was talking to him, and walking to the Chamber-door, gave her no other answer than this,

*Madam, that which men believ'd in the Old Testament to be a sin, all Princes account this day a gallantry: and saying this, he went away.*

The Duchess seeing all her words unprofitable, and work'd nothing upon the heart of the Duke, which was harder than any rock, to all Counsels that were given him to take him off his scandalous living; she resolv'd at last to try another way, and employ greater strengths



strengths than her own, though she went far to fetch them. She knew very well the veneration of the Duke for the Senate of *Venice*, and she had often heard him profess his considerable Obligations to that illustrious Republick, with which he held great Correspondence for the interest and considerations of his own State. Therefore she took the occasion of petitioning that Senate in private to interpose their authority, to deliver her from her troubles, and to take the Duke from his scandalous way of life with the Countess.

That Senate, who does nothing without great Caution and Prudence, did not think this a necessary business for the whole body of the Counsel to take notice of, therefore they order'd *Monsieur Justiniani* to undertake it as a particular man, and to use all possible diligence in the affair: That Lord did not fail to receive that Commission with much respect and submission, but he was not without fear that he should be able to effect nothing to the satisfaction of the Senate, nor of the Archduchess; he nevertheless omitted

red no opportunity of surprizing the Duke, to talk to him about it, and having found an hour fit for his purpose, he begun to talk of this Commission with an admirable Eloquence back'd with Reasons so solid as never yet was seen come from the tongue of that Excellent Oratour; but all his Eloquence and strong Reasons were unprofitable; all the Discourses of this Illustrious Lord producing no effect, and made no impressiō in the heart of the Duke, who answer'd resolutely to that Oracle of the Senate, that there was but one remedy to cure so great a sickness, and that was, To send for an Executioner from *Venice*, to cut his heart out of his breast, because as long as it staid there, it must of necessity be the Countesses, and without depriving him of his heart, it was impossible to take from him the love he bore to the Countess. After that reply *Justiniani* found it to no purpose to press him further, and to undertake any more against so great a wilfulness, as he discover'd in the Duke.

That Prince then shutting his eyes to all kind of Considerations, lived with

with the Countess like a Husband with his Wife, he carried her along with him when he went a Hunting, and also to the Palace royal of *Mantua*, where his wife the Archduchess also lay, he eat with the Countess, slept with her, and caressed her in the presence of all his Courtiers, almost before the face of that poor Princess his wife, who although she saw not what they ordinarily did, did not fail to hear of it, having the story of what passed between these two Lovers brought to her every day, all the Embassadors, the Gentlemen, Noblemen, as also all the Ladies of *Mantua*, admired the great Goodness of this Princess, to suffer with so much Patience so great an injury, or to say better, such an affliction of heart; for to say the truth, that dishonest love of the Dukes brought more glory to the Duchess than any disgrace, because she in that Patience expressed so great a vertue, in despising jealousy, and mocking at all those carnal pleasures of Matrimony, and letting the world see that all her trouble and mortification proceeded onely from no other cause than the sin

fin her Husband committed, and therefore we are not to call that Patience of hers a corporal injury, but an affliction of Spirit.

There wanted no Ladies nor Gentlemen about the Court, who counsell'd the Duchess from time to time to revenge her self of that Prostitute, by one of those Draughts so common in *Italy*, as the onely remedy to put an end not onely to her own affliction, but also the Duke her husbands adultery, and to take away the dishonour of the Countesses Family, besides the depriving the Court of its great trouble.

Amongst the rest there were two persons of very large Consciences, as one may say, wide as a Friars sleeve, offered themselves voluntarily to do this deed, the one was a Tailor, who proffered to end the Countesses life with the Shot of a Harquebuz, which he would in private Shoot at her, and no body should know of it, and that he would take great care in chusing his time, asking for recompence of that action but two hundred Pistols, to keep him in any place he should be forc'd to fly to, it not being possible after doing that

that to think of returning back to his own house; or if they thought that summe too much for him, he askt no more than a good Recommendation to the Archduke, to be favourably treated with him.

The other person that offerd to dispatch the Countess was a Lady and her kinswoman, honourable by reason of her age, who believing her self interested in the dis-reputation the Countess had brought upon her Family, and touched with shame and compassion for the Archduchess, offerd her self also to poison this adulterous Countess, so privately that none should ever know it.

But that poor Princess who lookt upon all those Miseries, as being by the permission of Heaven, and receiving them as coming from the hands of God, did not onely blame those bloudy resolutions, and tragical designs of those murtherers, but she also forbid them for ever the presenting themselves before her with those Propositions, and it is said that one day, as she was discoursing with her Confessour (in the presence of the Governess of her house)



house) of the scandalous life the Duke liv'd with that Countess, and the Proposals had been offered her of revenging that adultery. That Confessour told her, *That great persons might commit a small evil, to deliver themselves from a greater.* Which the Duchess scarce heard him say, but guessing well his design, which was onely to carry her to revenge, she quickly replyed, *We had rather suffer the Countess to live with her sin, than to let her die with ours.*

These words sufficiently testified the great goodness and admirable virtue of that excellent Princess, with which she indured all her disgrace so well, that she took more delight in suffering, whil'st others were pleas'd, than she could have taken satisfaction amongst all kind of prosperities, whil'st other people had been unhappy; also she never went about to buy her own repose by a Crime, and satisfy the desires of her body by an offence so prejudiciall to her soul, which makes me believe that God will take her into his particular care during her Regency, and so much the more, because she

she prefers the interest of her Maker before all those of the world.

The Emperour and the Archduke sent by their Ambassadors a desire to the Duke of *Mantua*, that he would a little open his eyes, and consider the great scandal he liv'd in, even in the sight of all the Princes of *Italy*, protesting that they propounded this to him not out of resentment, but were press'd to it out of the tender affection they bore to his person. They also assur'd him that they had not been solicited to this motion by the Princess their kinswoman, who complain'd not in the least to them of ill treatment, but on the contrary, protested to them that the Duke her Husband honour'd her very much, and except in the bed near him, to which the Countess alone was priviledged, the Duke us'd her with all the civility imaginable, as well in private as publick. Therefore the Emperour and the Archduke had no cause to complain of any thing, and less yet, in that it happen'd contrary in this scandalous life of the Dukes, to that which ordinarily passes in such a case by many that use their wives ill,  
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for the sake of their Mistresses. For the Duke, contrary to other men, was grown so crafty, that he knew how to act cunningly by apparently satisfying his wife before the world, and taking his private pleasures with the Countess; so that it was not easie for any to observe any change in the looks of that chaste Princess, but rather much contentment and pleasure. It is true, that outside Friendship in appearance ought not to be imputed to the care and prudence of the Duke so much as to the goodness of his wife; who being endowed with a singular vertue, and an extraordinary prudence, could hide her grief, and expresse no signes of trouble in her Face, although her heart was press'd down with affliction.

The Court of *Rome* received with much displeasure the news of this scandalous adultery, and the trouble it received was aggravated by the quality of that great Person, who was guilty of that publick disorder; and therefore it gave Orders to the Superiours of the Convents at *Casal* and *Mantua* to injoyne the Preachers to exaggerate the nature of this Crime in their Pulpits, whil'st

whil'ft in the mean time the Duke suffer'd the World to Talk, and the Monks to Crofs themselves, and went to Sermons when the Fancy took him, and hearkned to what he liked; upon which, it hapned, that a Father of the Order of St. *Francis*, by an indiscrete Zeale, having too much reflected upon the Person of the Duke, and too openly spoke of the Countess, found himself so intangled, he was constrain'd to quit *Mantua*, till he was forc'd to Swear, That for time to come he would change his Note, and in Correcting the Vices of Princes, he would henceforward use more discretion.

The Dukes Confessor was also exhorted to remember his Highness sometimes of the Obligation he had to leave off his scandalous life; (as if the greatest evil of that Crime lay in the Scandal of it:) but that good Father lov'd better to be in the good graces of a Prince, Adulterous and Criminal; then Enemy of a Just and Innocent one: And furthermore, he was so indulgent, that when he Confest him, he easily gave him Absolution; Laying all the fault upon the weakness of

our Nature: In truth, there are Confessors in these dayes, that are cause of the loss of many Princes; For, they being Ambitious to Domineer over the other Brothers of the Convent by their Princes Favour; they would be content (rather then lose that Dignity) not onely to send their Princes to Hell, but also go themselves to the Devil; neglecting the Duties of their Place, and their Pastoral Obligations, in excusing the Faults which these Illustrious Sinners commit.

The Countess also receiv'd from time to time her secret Mortifications, for the Bishop, solicited perhaps from *Rome*, and the Arch-Dutchess, represented to her sometimes the condition of her life, threatening to refuse to give her the Holy Sacrament at *Easter*, but it was but Threats, to which she hearkened very little, and which gave her but little trouble, because she was confident they would never be perform'd, for fear of disobliging his Highness; and the more, because she excused her self, by laying the fault upon the Duke, saying to him that came to speak to her from the Bishop, That being  
born



born a Subject, she could not command the Duke not to see her any more, because he would do her that Honour.

I cannot forbear in this place to relate an Accident, no less curious then Politick, which hapned during these passages.

My Lord Bishop of *Cassal* had undertaken a thing believed impossible by all the World, which was, to find out a remedy to divert the Duke from this Love of the Countess; which was so Publick, that there could not be a greater between two persons Married: but the whi<sup>st</sup> he labour'd by I know not what Political and Pastoral Zeal, he found the end of his dayes in seeking that of a Scandal; this Death of his regreted by all: he having been a Prelate of an exemplar life, and held worthy of so eminent a charge in the Church, in which he had alwayes shewed himself with great Zeale.

The Countess was not very sorry; seeing her self by that delivered from the apprehension, of losing the Dukes good Graces, of which she was in danger, by the strong exhortations of that

Bishop. On the contrary, she had no sooner heard the news of the Death of the Bishop, but speaking to her Sister the Countess *Louize*, she said to her, the poor Bishop is dead, for ayming too much at Fifty-Cuffs against Heaven; she meant by that, to shew it was all one, to Fight against Heaven, and to endeavour to ruine her Favour with the Duke.

The Earl her Brother going also to talke to her upon the Subject of the Bishops Death, said to her, Sister, you have lost a great Enemy at least, if he that is his Successor prove not of his humour: To which she answer'd; He shall be my Friend, or nothing.

The Bishops Funerals were scarce ended, but, as well from the State of *Mantua*, as *Rome*, there started up many pretenders to his place; The Pope pretended a right in the chusing of a Bishop for *Casal*, in the State of *Mantua*, because all knew very well, that although the right of making a Bishop of *Casal* belonged to his Holyness, yet there was no great satisfaction to be found, for any that should be made without the Dukes consent: It be-  
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ing certain, that to be a Bishop of any Town, against the Good-will of their Sovereign, it is no other, then to ruine any Mans Fortune, and keep him alwayes in trouble: There is no person that will accept it without having at the least the nomination of the Prince, or else a recommendation from him; And for this reason, there were as well at *Mantua* as at *Casal*, the pretenders to that Bishoprick, seeking to the Duke for a Nomination, or recommendation from his Highness.

Amongst many others, the Provost of *Miroglio* had a mind to this Bishoprick, and it was very easie for him to attain it, because no body dream't of him, for the way he took was better, and very different from those that the rest of the Pretenders had taken; he addressees himself to the Lady *Margaret*, with whom he had alwayes held a very good correspondence, and now sought her Recommendation by submissions and promises, with extraordinary Proffers; he promis'd her a Purse with a thousand Crowns in it to buy her a Diamond; protesting to her, that he would willingly

ly resign the Cross into her hands; shewing her by that, that he would never do any thing which should not be as she would have it, and to her satisfaction: he forgot not to intreate her, that for all these considerations she would imploy all her interest with his Highness, to obtain his Recommendation to his Holyness.

This occasion lookt so faire, that the Countess would not neglect it: Therefore she promis'd him to imploy all her credit to bring his design about, so well, that he should be satisfied with her indeavours; she went then to her Well-Beloved, and represented to him, how necessary it was to his Highness to have a Prelate at *Casal*, of another Humour then the former; who, under a colour of Zeal, should not interrupt the repose which their Loves enjoy'd, since the death of the last Bishop; telling him further, that *Mi-reglio* was a Man of a perfect prudence, and worthy of that Bishoprick; sounding these words often in the Dukes eares, My Heart, I desire thee to act so, that this affair succeed in behalf of this Gallant Man; and certainly, he

he was alwayes lookt upon as such; for, being a Prelate, he acquitted himself of his charge very well, and continues still to do so; and although he salutes every Body with a Smiling Countenance, and all kind of affability; and that in his ordinary Discourses he still mingles some jeasting word or other: he nevertheless with all that forgets not to Govern the Church and his Diocess extreamly well.

The Duke, who of himself was inclin'd to favour that Lord, not onely consented to the request of his Well-beloved in his behalfe, but engag'd himself further to act with all his power.

After this testimony of the Dukes good will, the Countess willing to try the constancy of this Lord *Miraglio*, and to discover what his Thoughts would be (if he arriv'd to that Bishoprick) of her Amour with the Duke, sent for him, and after having assur'd him of the Dukes Favour and Protection, to the end he desir'd it, she represented to him the great imprudence of the deceased Prelate, who, not content to enjoy his Bishoprick in peace, which



he held by the Dukes Favour, would trouble the repose of His Highness, in seeking to make him pass for an Adulterer.

Monsieur *Miroglio*, who, penetrated to the quick into the Soul of this Crafty woman, answer'd her like a Gallant Man; for, after he had very much condemn'd the procedure of the dead Prelate, he Swore to her, that if ever he receiv'd the Mitre, he would never do any thing, but what should please the Duke and her self; furthermore, he added, That the Sins of Princes were but small in the eyes of God; and in fine, he brought many other such kind of reasons, and perhaps better to reach his end, and compass his design, onely to appear blind to the Dukes Scandalous Life, and Publick Adultery.

The Countess was not unsatisfied with this Discourse, and tolerating that Lord, she made him so many advantageous Promises, that he parted from her very well contented, and pleased the more with the last words of the Countess, which were, That he  
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was as sure of being Bishop, as he was certain that the Duke was Lord of *Casal*, and Sovereign of his State.

The time of parting for *Rome* being come, my Lord *Miroglia* was at the Palace, to obtain the Letters of Recommendation from His Highness, and receive the necessary Orders; but the Duke, to let him see that he consider'd in that Choice, more the Interest of his Beloved, sent for him, and told him, My Lord, you shall receive from the Countess all you wish: To whom he answer'd, with a low Congee, The Hands of such a Lady could bring him nothing but good Fortune.

The Duke Writ divers Letters to the Court of *Rome*, to recommend the Interest of this Pretender to the Bishoprick; but, amongst the rest, that which he writ to his Holyness, was so much to his advantage, he could not reasonably desire one greater; and because the Countess gave him this Letter open, I will here give you the Contents to satisfy the Curiosity of the Reader.

*Most*

# Most Holy FATHER.

**A**fter having most Humbly Kissed your Feet, with all the Affection of my Heart; I Salute your Holiness with all the Humility of my Soul; recommending in the mean time to the Politick and Ecclesiastick Zeal of Your Holiness, the Interests of my Lord Miroglio, Provost of this Town, and a Man very much beloved in my house; he aspires to this Vacant Bishoprick, and if I am not deceiv'd, I believe his Merit renders him worthy enough of it; the time of the Warr, which makes this Town liable to great suffering, both within and without, obliges me to be more earnest with Your Holiness, to consider the Person I recommend to you, and Create Bishop of Casal this Subject, whom I look upon as my Intimate Friend, and a Man qualified to remove all Causes of Fealousie, which usually grow from the Introduction of Prelates who are strangers, into such  
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*eminent Places; and therefore I desire Your Holiness, with the Humility of a Son, to Grant me with this Grace Your Fatherly Benediction.*

The Countess had no sooner given this Letter to Monsieur *Miroglio*, and the others address'd to some of the Cardinals, then he went for *Rome*; where, being arriv'd, he deliver'd the Letters, and Solicited his Affaires and Interests with a care suitable to his Pretensions; and such as you may guess by the usual diligence of thole who aspire to the like Dignities.

The other Pretenders, who were very numerous, seeing how considerable his Recommendations were, and that his Party was the strongest, begun *A la mode* of the Court of *Rome*, to Cross him, and with all their power endeavour'd to exclude him, by many proofes of his insufficiency, murmuring against his Person; and which was worse, publishing many things against his Reputation.

There were two chiefe Reasons which they set up, to discountenance his

his Pretensions; the First was, That there was no regard to be taken to those Letters of Recommendation procured by an Adulterous Woman, and bought of her with a great Sum of ready Mony: And the Second was, That it would be Scandalous to make the Cosin of a Heretick a Bishop, who also carry'd the same name of her Family: But not to leave the Reader in doubt upon this Particular; I will explain it all in two words.

Twelve yeares before this, *Don Mario Miroglio*, Canon of the Cathedral Church of *Casal*, neer Kinsman to Lord Provost *Miroglio*, was retir'd from that Town to *Geneva*, to the great displeasure of the Chapter, and the House of *Miroglio*, who spar'd for nothing to bring him back from whence he was fled; but he, deriding all their Remonstrances, chang'd his Religion, to embrace that which is Professed at *Geneva*; and was afterwards Married; he dyed some time after, leaving two Male Children behind him, to Eternize his Name in that Church so contrary to the Church of *Rome*. The



The whole sacred Colledge was informed of that by his enemies, who had the same pretension with him, and above all they chiefly inform'd the Cardinal *Sforza*, as he that spoke the freeliest, and spared not the Pope himself, when he was to give his advice, and they were not deceiv'd, for the Cardinal *Sforza*, going to the Pope, sought at first to make a way into his thoughts, to alter his resolution of making *Miroglio* Bishop, and seeing for all his endeavours, that all things went on that Lords side, he was resolute, and could not forbear, saying one day to the Pope in a full Consistory,

Most holy Father!

**I***F your Holiness resolves to make the brother of a heretick a Bishop at least, let it not be the pimp of an adulterous woman.*

The Pope notwithstanding knowing that Cardinals humour, said onely to him, that he was very well acquainted with the merits of the Lord *Miroglio*.

*Miroglio*

*Miroglio* then made Bishop, contrary to the expectation of all the world, and to the great discontent of his enemies, he gave many thanks to the Countess, besides giving her the thousand Crowns, which he had promis'd her before, and I will not speak of the many Presents he made to divers persons of the Dukes Court.

This Prelate wanted for no civility nor respect for the Countess, and honour'd her very often with his visites, staying many afternoons with her, whilst the Prince was at *Mantua*; for when the Duke was at *Casal*, her house was forbid to all the world, except the Duke, to whom it only belong'd to Court that Fair one; one day however, as the Bishop was going out of the Countesses house, to whom he had been making a visit, he met the Duke, who said to him, My Lord Bishop, it were better that your Greatness should enter, and I should go out from this house, then for me to go in, and you to go out. He said this onely to give the Bishop to understand, that he who was a Prelate ought to give the Countess the absolute

lution of her fins, which he was going to commit with her.

But to return to the Duchess, who was, as one may say, forsaken; you must know that seeing all things desperate as to the conversation of the Prince her Husband, she resolv'd to give her soul some rest, to let him do whatsoever pleas'd him, without seeming to take any notice, and to give these Lovers leave to take all their swing, with a full resolve to mind nothing for the future, and to take no further care, importuning them no longer, all she had done having been to little purpose.

The greatest favour she had desir'd from her Husband had been, That he would content himself with the scandal he gave to his own State, without doing such gross things, to make himself the discourse of other Nations, and the scorn of the Courts of other Princes; and indeed the Duke and the Countess liv'd in such liberty, that it was verily believ'd that there was a private divorce between the Duke and his Duchess, so that by the consentment of them both, their marriage was broke;

broke; and that he had after that privately married the Countess, which nevertheless was very far from truth; but it was impossible to shut the common peoples mouths, as long as this scandal was so publike. The Duke cared not to go one step without the Countess, they eat and drunk together, and they never went to take the Air without one another; if the Duke went from *Mantua* to *Casal*, or to *Mantua* from *Casal*, he always carried the Countess with him in the Coach, Alone; and for her part, she could not in the journey suffer her self one minute to forsake him who was more to her than she was to her self. I leave these considerations to the Impartial Reader, and not to the Lover, or whosoever he is that reads this Book, and is troubled with amorous fancies; what followed these privacies.

The impudence of this bold woman grew to that excess, that not content to have spoild the good Judgment, Nature, and the Prudence of the Duke, in seeking to govern him her own way, and injoy him according to the motions of her brutish appetites,  
and

and believing her self not oblig'd to keep any measures, triumphing insolently over her shame, it seem'd very little to her to be talk'd on onely in her own Countrey, although she gloried much in that; but she chiefly aspir'd at the publishing her favour with the Duke in other Nations, desiring they should know how much she enjoyed with him above all that the greatest Favorites could ever pretend to from any Prince; though she a little fear'd that the stories of her sin and adultery might come to their ears; She was ambitious that fame should publish her in all places, and that not onely the people of *Montferrat*, and the *Mantnans*, but all *Italy* (not to speak of *Asia* and *Europe*) should know that she accompanied the Duke every where, that they should see her play, and walk with him, and be eye-witneses, that she slept with this Prince when she pleas'd.

To satisfie this ambition she desir'd his Highness, that he would carry her to *Venice*, to see the Solemnity which is there upon *Ascension*-day, but the Duke, who weigh'd all things with

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more



more prudence, promis'd he would satisfie her, in sending with her what persons soever she pleas'd to have in her company, except himself; not thinking it fit for him to appear with her before the Senate, since upon her account he had receiv'd a private rebuke from them, as I told you before, but she who onely sought to appear there before all the strangers that were at that time at *Venice*, and to please her ambition more than her curiosity, could not receive his offer; and told him plainly that she would go with no other company than his Highness. In fine she knew so well how to charm him with her caresses; and gave him so many reasons, that she made him resolve to go himself, and carry her with him, as she desired.

The Duke would make this Voyage *incognito*, but his Mistress would carry her Sister the Countess *Lovize*, and three other Ladies with her, all very well drest, and with them some Maids of Honour and waiting Gentlewomen, which was the reason that those who were not acquainted with the Amours of these two passionate  
Lovers

Lovers took this fair Pilgrim for the Archduchess, who went *incognito*, and to say the truth, this Voyage could not be made with more magnificence nor joy for her, she might have been called a little triumphant Princess, who had alwayes the Prince at her side, who led her by the hand, as well in publike as private, and she was so over-joyed to see her self honour'd and served by all the Courtiers, who treated her as if she had been their true and lawful Sovereign Princess, that it is impossible to find words to express her satisfaction.

The noise of their arrival in *Venice* was quickly spread through all the town, and curiosity carried immediately all the town in crouds to the streets, to see these two Lovers who were so much talkt of, not onely through all *Italy*, but every where else, the streets were fill'd with a number almost infinite of persons of both sexes, who crouded one another to behold with how great a grace the Duke led the Countess by the hand in the sight of all the people.

It is confidently spoken that this

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Prince

Prince spent in this Voyage more than three thousand Pistols in many Presents which he made, he gave amongst the Ladies of his troop five hundred Crowns, and the rest to the Countess, who coveted all that she saw in every shop amongst the Merchants; and when she took notice of any rarity, which was commended in that Countrey, she spared no caresses nor flatteries to the Duke to perswade him to buy that knock upon which she had set her heart. It is certainly believ'd, that the Duke till that hour had not found any sign of covetousness in the Countess, and till then she had never express'd a desire of any thing besides the love of her Gallant; but the Air of *Venice* alter'd her nature, and what ever she had a mind to, the Duke never contradicted her desires, he was so far from denying her any thing, that one day as they past by a Jewellers shop, they shew'd this fair Lady a great number of precious stones, amongst which there was a little Rose of Diamonds, round beset with little Golden Eaglets, which held out their Bills to kiss one another, which seem'd almost the arms of the house

house of *Gonzague*, the Countess then looking stedfastly upon that Jewel, and with great desires, without daring to ask it, for fear of being too importunate, the price being more than four thousand Crowns, with some caresses and flatteries, without once opening her mouth to beg it, she oblig'd her loving captive to give it her with these words, *I shall not be much troubled to part with all my money to her, to whom I have given all my heart.*

In returning home they went to *Padua*, where by chance that day the Comedy of *Joseph* was acted in music, which the Duke would see; he went thither with the Countess, followed by all his people, and placed himself with the other Ladies of his company in a Box over against the Stage, where he always held his Mistress in his arms, imbracing her in the face of the whole Assembly, who took not their eyes off them one moment. In the mean time, when the Scene where the wife of *Potiphar* is represented, forcing of *Joseph* to sleep with her, and particularly at that place where that example of Chastity re-

fuses her, and flying away leaves her his Cloak. The Countess turning to the Duke said, *I cannot praise this young man, for having thus left an affamish'd Lady;* to which the Duke answer'd, *All the world is not so charitable, nor so complaisant, as I am for thee.*

The scandal which all Lombardy suffer'd by this Voyage, displeased the Duchess very much, and she could not refrain the expressing her resentments to the Duke; but since her words accompanied with her ordinary Mildness had nothing of indignation in them, they made no impressions upon the heart of her husband, who had intirely sacrific'd her to the Countess, with whom he liv'd in such a manner that the world were almost perswaded that there had pass'd some Clandestine Marriage between them, which was the Cause of no small displeasure amongst the people who were very much afflicted to see their Prince so effeminated.

In the mean time the Court of Rome murmur'd, and bore with much impatience, not onely the life which the Duke led with the Countess, but  
also



also were more troubled at the Popes silence, who sought not to remedy these scandals: this noise and these impatiencies increas'd by the return of Cardinal *Leomelini*, who came from this Legation at *Bologne*, who having had some contests with the Duke, sought a revenge: and since we are come to speak of that particular, I think it will not be from the purpose to touch, in passing by, upon it as briefly as I can possible.

The Nobility of *Bologne* had invited the Duke to see some Comical representations that were to be in the Town, with a magnificence and preparation extraordinary; and because the Duke could not longer live without his Countess, nor scarce go four steps without having her in his Company, he carried her again with him, as if she had been his wife, to see those shews aforesaid.

The Gentlemen, that belong'd to the Legate Cardinal *Leomelini*, could not refrain from murmuring with some kind of scorn and mocks to the Dukes actions, who with an universal scandal carried along with him an Adulteress,

even into the Towns of the resort of the Ecclesiastical State; on the other side those who belong'd to the Duke seeing themselves oblig'd to defend the reputation of their Sovereign, after many injurious words on both sides, came to blows, to the great displeasure of the Nobility in that Town, who saw themselves oblig'd in that conjuncture to take the Dukes part, against those of the Cardinal, so that the Duke seeing himself affronted, sent to complain to his Eminence, who in stead of satisfaction in punishing the beginners, protected his men, and threatned the Duke himself.

The Duke went out then from *Bologne*, all in rage, with design to cause the Cardinal to be murder'd in his Coach, and to that end he sent upon *Good Friday* twenty four men well armed, who, being enter'd the Town, discharg'd at the same time many Pistols into the Legates Windows, not that they had designs to kill, but affront him; all the inhabitants were in a maze at the boldness of those Cavaliers, who hazarded their lives with so much confidence, they saved themselves

selves nevertheless without receiving any hurt, although they were pursued by the Guards.

The Gentlemen of *Bologne*, and particularly those who had invited his Highness to *Bologne*, perceiving that the Duke was very angry, and to prevent any further mischief that might happen through this disorder, sent word to Pope *Alexander*, to the end that he might hinder it, who, making use of his ordinary prudence by a Maxime of Policy, took that employment from the Cardinal, pretending he would give him one more suitable to his Estate, and put in his place the Cardinal *Farnese*, who was of the last creation, and friend to the Duke.

*Leomelini* knew presently from whence this change came, and therefore without loosing time returned to *Rome* to be revenged of this injury, which, to speak truth, was an affront; to arrive at this design, he began presently to inform all the Conclave of the Cardinals, and his Holiness also, of that shameful life which the Duke lived with the Countess, and the  
great

great scandal which it gave to all *Lombardy*. That song which the Courtiers sung quickly spread over the whole Town of *Rome*, so that in the streets no other thing was talked on.

That Cardinal was very importunate to have this Duke proceeded against by way of Excommunication, giving them to understand with his usual authority, that if they suffered such an adultery to be unpunished, the Hereticks without doubt would prevail, and the holy Chair would suffer a great blow to its reputation, and in fine would condemn the Church for tolerating and permitting adultery.

But the Duke inform'd of all these things, caused it to be told the Cardinal *Leomelini*, *That he would teach him to speak, if he would not learn to hold his tongue.* For all this his Eminence chang'd not his note, who being not accustomed to tongue injuries, repeated always the same song, and very far from hearkning to peace, or to seek it, the more that he saw himself threatened, he repeated his complaints the more to the Pope and his Cardinals.

But

But the Pope *Alexander* understanding the affairs of the World, nor being ignorant how he ought to treat with a Sovereign Prince, went not so hastily to work, and press'd not so much to undertake a Prince who had merited so well from the holy Chair, nor however, at least, for no other subject but a woman, he well knowing that the Duke was not the onely Adulterer, and that that business would reflect upon many Princes who lived in the same disorder, and therefore he gave not much ear to the Cardinal *Leomelini*, no more than to the other Cardinals, who undertook this business to the Pope, not for any hate they had to the Duke, but because they were set on by this Cardinal.

The Pope at last seeing himself pressed, and not to be wanting in his duty of Pastour, ordered the Cardinal grand Penetencier, to write to *Miraglio*, Bishop of *Casal*, that he should proceed against the Countess by the ordinary wayes in the like cases; that is to say, to refuse her the Communion at *Easter*, and in case that she sought not to mend and change her life, to put  
an



an end to that great scandal, after he had given her all those fatherly corrections, to which his charge oblig'd him, he should proceed to Excommunication, or the other Ecclesiastical Censures, which the Councils command to be used in such kind of Cases.

The Penetencier fail'd not to obey the order that was given him to write, but not in the manner which the Cardinal *Leomelini* desired, because he writ to that Prelate in gentle terms, commanding to behave himself in this affair with great Prudence, with a suitable zeal, which did not suite with the designs and desires of that Eminence. The Bishop had no sooner received that Letter, but he communicated it to the Duke and the Countess, who derided it, and the more, because the Bishop himself laugh'd at it too, who would not do any thing against the pleasure of two persons, who had given him his Bishoprick.

This Prelate taking his leave at the end of that discourse, the Duke taking him by the hand said in his ear,  
*My Lord, write to the Cardinal Peni-*  
*tentier,*

*sentier, That when the Pope Chases all the Bawdy-Houses out of Rome, we will drive the Countess from hence.* It is true, he said that more to rally with the Bishop, then for any other reason, because he knew very well, that those words would not go so far as *Rome*; though, as I believe, he had not much car'd, or not at all if they had; nay, if they had been told to his Holiness.

The Bishop return'd a Letter to *Rome* full of good and solid choice Reasons, which shew'd the necessity there was for the good of the Church, that they should shut their eyes to those disorders, not to enrage the Duke, for if they did so, he fear'd he might do worse, and might proceed to trouble and punish the repose of the Clergy; in effect, he was not deceiv'd, for if ever it had happen'd that the Countess had receiv'd that discontent, of being struck by any censure of the Church; the Duke, who would also have lookt upon himself as injur'd, had without doubt molested the Clergy and the Bishop; for Princes never want Reason to make Criminals: and since Ecclesiastical Men will not acknowledg themselves

themselves Subjects to them, and particularly the Bishops, who look upon themselves as exempt from owning that Title; but, it is a great abuse, and they deceive themselves grossly.

The Answer of this Prelate hapned, I know not by which way, to be communicated to the Cardinal *Leomelini*, who presently began to murmur against that Bishop, as he did against the Duke, not sparing him, even in the Consistory of the Cardinals; and saying all the ill things he could of him, though falsly: For to speak truth, this Prelate had alwayes behaved himself like an honest man, and has no vices that are worthy of reproches.

What dissimulation soever the Holy Father shew'd, yet he was nevertheless sensibly touched with the Advertisements he every day received of the Scandalous Life of the Duke and the Countess; and therefore mov'd with Zeale and Compassion, he made many Prayers be offered in every Church, to the end, that it would please God to touch the Heart of that Prince; and draw him from his obstinate hardness of heart, in going on in so infamous a

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sin as that was, in which he had so long liv'd.

But at last, making reflection upon the duty he was oblig'd to, as Sovereign Pastor of the Church, he saw well, that to hold his Peace, would not be to acquit himself well: on the other side also, as he would not proceed in that business with rigor against that Prince; he resolved, being combated with his Duty and his Fear, to employ the most gentle remedies, and to imploy in them Persons also virtuous, indowed with Piety.

He sent, to that purpose, the Father *Cateri Alapuchin* to Mantua and Casal; he was a Person celebrated as well for the fairness of his carriage, as the excellence of his vertue; with Fatherly instructions setting before him the Service he should do both to God and the Church, and that he should Merit very much from the Holy Chair, if he could overcome the Spirit of this Duke, and obtain any Victory over that of the Countess, to make them leave off this Scandalous Life, so much to the Scandal of the whole Church.

This good Father *Capuchin*, guessing

sing the hardness of the hearts of **A-**  
 dulterers, felt in himself some repug-  
 nance for this Imployment, despairing  
 of ever conquering the Obstination of  
 the Duke, or to move his heart, which  
 Sin had made harder then a Diamond;  
 nevertheless, without reply to the  
 Pope, he received that Commission  
 which his Holiness impos'd upon him,  
 with a ready and as humble obedience  
 which belongs to that Order of *Capu-*  
*chins*, and is so sutable to their Habit;  
 in a word, with a *Capuchins* Obedience;  
 and with Promises, To do all in his  
 Power to serve his Holiness and the  
 Church faithfully, he would spare no  
 Cares to procure the Salvation of the  
 Soules of the Duke and the Coun-  
 tress.

The Pope, in giving this good Fa-  
 ther his Blessing, commanded him, that  
 if peradventure he perceived that his  
 Charitable Remonstrances, and Father-  
 ly Corrections had no effect, and that  
 by mild wayes he should work nothing  
 upon the Heart of that Prince, that he  
 should proceed to some kind of Ri-  
 gor and Threatning, in the behalfe of  
 the Holy Chair; and yet withal that  
 he



he should not fail to let the goodness of the Pope be known, and to excuse him to the Duke, if they came so far as to Ecclesiastical Censures against his Person.

This Father went from *Rome* with this Order, drawing towards *Mantua*; but, in passing by *Bologne*, he communicated all these Orders he had receiv'd from His Holiness to the Superior of a Convent of his Order in that Town, and asking his Counsel, How he should Act, in an Affair of so great Importance? they consult together, and both concluded, That it would be better to stay for the opportunity of the Dukes being at *Casal*, to the end, that he might have the convenience of assaulting both their Hearts together; our *Capuchin* followed this advice, and in stead of continuing on his way for *Mantua*, drew towards *Casal*, where he arriv'd two days sooner then the Duke, who came thither with the greatest part of the Court.

This *Capuchin* being then arriv'd at *Casal*, discover'd to almost the whole Convent the occasion of his Voyage, and pray'd them to joyn their Prayers

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to

to his, to obtain from God a favourable success in so difficult and dangerous an enterprise; but that policy of his succeeded very ill, contrary to his wishes, because the plot being discover'd, the Noise of the Subject of his Voyage to *Casal* was spread through the whole Town, so that he was discover'd before the Duke gave him the Hearing; but at last his Highness coming also to be inform'd, forbid every body to suffer this *Capuchin* to come near his Person, and not permit him to enter in any place where he was; which this poor Father perceiving, despairing of acquitting himself of his Commission, and the more because he was told, That the Duke was going suddenly to *Mantua*; he thought it necessary to take his Journey to *Rome*, following the Advice given him by the Lord *Miroglia* himself.

All the World had great respect for this proceeding of the Court of *Rome*, and so much the more, because it had employ'd those of the Order of *Capuchins*, which is in great veneration in *Italy*; nevertheless that hindered not the

the Duke; and the Countess, to mock at all they did to stifle their Love, which became greater and greater; making the Proverb good, That privation begets Appetite; because the more they saw themselves molested, upon the Subject of their Amours, the more it inflam'd in them the desire to do all things, that could contribute, in any sort, to their Delights, and what pleas'd them.

The Duke was inform'd of all they said at *Rome*, touching his Love to the Countess; and, in truth, they spoke of it with too much scorn; making Libels and Satyrs, extreamly piquant, against his Person; also, in return, they spared neither the Cardinals nor the Pope himself in the Court of *Mantua*; though the Duke did what he could to silence them, like a good Prince as he was (for his greatest Vice was that Adultery) so great was his respect to the Holy Chair, he would not suffer them in his presence to speak any thing against the Heads of the Church; however his Courtiers being not of his humour, it was not in his power to make them hold their peace; there-

fore their insolence grew to that height, that there was seen at *Rome* some Libels, in which they Challeng'd the Inhabitants of that Noble City to come to *Mantua*, to let them see they would revenge the Affront they pretended to have received from them.

But it is now time for us to visit his Highness in his Tent, to see in what condition his Love is, now he is turn'd a Soldier.

The good Fortune of the *French* had been so prosperous till then, that they had carryed their Victorious Armes beyond *Flanders*, *Catalonia*, and *Roussillon*; and though they had not as yet begun to shew themselves of that side of *Caracene*, towards *Milan*, yet they took the way to be Masters of *Italy*, to which that Nation ardently aspires: The Enemies beat the Field, and rang'd sometimes on one side, and then of another, upon the Banks of the River *Tesino*, with so much Liberty, they seem'd to be absolute Masters; they were commanded by the Duke of *Modene*, one of the great Captains of our time; and he was accompanied with as many Captains as  
he

he had Soldiers; that is to say, they were the Valientest Warriours in the World; for, in truth, at that time the *French* were so esteem'd.

But the *Spaniards* perceiving themselves not in a condition to oppose those Invincible Conquerors; and, that the Affaires went but too ill in *Lombardy*, address'd themselves to the Emperour, desiring him to assist them in the Defence of a place which was so considerable in the Empire; this Monarch granted their requests the more willingly, in regard of his own interest there, as well as that of the House of *Austria*; and indeed he made it appear, that the Empire was interess'd in it, doing upon that account all in his power, and joyning with those of that House, with whom he enter'd into a very strict League, to prevent the Duchy of *Mantua* from falling into other hands.

The Duke *Charles* was to that end nominated Vicar of the Empire, and they gave him to that purpose the Command of an Army, that he joyning with the *Spaniards* might stop the Progress of the *French* Arms in *Lombardy*:



*bardy*: In the mean time the *French* thought fit (in their Council of War) to lay Siege to *Alexandria*, one of the strongest Towns in the Duchy; and although this place was very well Mann'd and defended, this resolution nevertheless gave much apprehension to the *Spaniards*, since it was a place of such consequence to any that could possess themselves of it; and for that reason the Duke *Charles* thought himself oblig'd in Duty to go himself in Person to assist a place so important to the repose of all *Italy*; after they had then order'd all things necessary for the succour of *Alexandria*, he gave Order for the March of his Army; he parted, to that end, from *Millan*, where he had been *Incognito*, to speak with the Ministers of *Spain*, not on purpose, but to take an occasion of passing from *Mantua* to *Montferrat*, and by that means to go to *Casal*, to visit his Countess, who impatiently expected him.

As soon as he saw her, he express'd his kindness in an extraordinary manner to her, having been absent from her 15 dayes, so that it was impossible

possible for any to snatch this Prince out of the Arms of that beauty in 2 dayes ; notwithstanding all the Remonstrances of those which were sent to him from the Army, who exhorted him to come in all haste to the relief of *Alexandria*, which was going infallibly to be lost, if there were not some kind of Succour sent immediately to it.

The Countess had taken a resolution of putting her self in the Habit of a Man, and to follow the Duke wheresoever he went ; and although the Duke seem'd to consent to it at first, yet he thought it not very convenient in the end, and therefore she saw her self necessitated to remain at *Casal*, having obtain'd a promise from her Lover, That every day she should receive from him an Account of his health, and the progress of his Highness with that of his Army.

This Prince parted from *Casal* then the fourth of *August*, accompanied with his Countess, who went with him in his Coach above three Miles ; and also, by an excess of Gallantry, he Brother drove the Coach till they came to a certain Village, where

they stopt to take leave of his Highness; who, drawing apart his Well-beloved, was sometime in conversation with her, but not satisfied with that, and what he had enjoy'd of her company all the way, they enter'd into a Peasants house hard by that place, where they were together a full hour, to the great heart-breaking of all the World, who waited for them in the Street, although in the meanwhile the Countesses Brother invented all he could imagine to divert the Company.

After these two Lovers had given their adieus to each other, having finished all their Ceremonies in the Chamber of that good poor Countrymans house, they went out, and being yet not able to separate for good and all, they staid at the door, talking together, toying and fooling with one another, and also to make Love half an hour longer, whilst in the meantime there arrived a Post from the Marquis of *Facnsaldagnia*, Governor of *Milan*, who earnestly desir'd his Highness, That he would hasten his depart to the Army, where they impatiently

impatiently waited for him, having absolute need of his presence: who ever had seen the Duke and his Countess so strictly imbrac'd, would have thought they were never to meet again, and if a Gentleman a great friend of the Dukes had not confidently told his Highness that the night came on apace, and that it was not safe for him to enter in the dark into a Countrey that was the rendezvous of the enemy, I believe the Duke and his Countess would have staid a good while longer in that place, which yet was not a very convenient one, to make love in. In fine, after that these two Lovers had given some tears to their future absence, they took leave of one another; She returning to *Casal*, and the Duke marching towards *Alexandria*, where the Army staid for him, and where the *Spaniards* Council of War was held, to consult upon the way to secure that place so considerable to their State, and which they already believed out of their power.

The Marquess of *Faensaldagnia* had commanded an apartement for the Duke to be made ready in a Palace,  
a mile

a mile from *Alexandria*, about which was encamped the Imperial and *Spanish* Army, as being a very advantageous Post to trouble the enemy, who had no defence from their shot, and were blockt up between the Town and the River.

The Duke was scarce arrived, but finding that Air unwholsome for him, and being very much heated by the journey, he was presently seiz'd by a Feaver, which obliged him to go to bed, but that which added to his trouble, was to see himself in a Countrey so prejudicial to his health, and where he could not have those things fit for his cure, with that diligence which his disease required, *Tortona* being distant from him two miles, and that was the neereſt Town wherein there were Apothecaries.

Two things begun to trouble his mind and raise his spleen and melancholly, The one was that such a misfortune happened to him in the First time of his life that he had appear'd in the field, fearing it would oblige him to return to *Casal*, without the glory of having done any thing to shew his



his courage; but that which was his greatest heart-breaking was, That he fancied the *Spaniards* would believe him a Coward, under which notion he should pass for such through all those Countries, not being able to imagine they would be so civil to lay all the fault upon his Feaver, (which really was the cause) but would rather believe it a fair pretence of the Dukes to hide his cowardly heart. The second thing which so tormented him, was, To see himself alone, and deprived of the service of his Countess, as he had been formerly: he resolved to keep his bed notwithstanding, and stay in that Palace which they had provided for him, because he would not loose the sight of the *Spaniards*, who came to visit him (whilst his Feaver thus perplexed him,) and advised with him of the means the most fit to enterprize something upon the enemy.

This sickness of the Dukes was not carried so close but that it came to the ears of the Countess, who was not a little troubled at it, and, as I believe, it was his Highness that advertised her of it, being confident that she would not fail

fail to come to him as soon as she receiv'd that news. It was that which the Duke desired with greatest passion; for being without his Mistress he was without his heart, as he himself assur'd her brother, who writ word of it to the Countess, by the express command of the Duke.

As soon as the news of the Dukes sickness arrived at *Casal*, the Countess was so afflicted, that one would have thought she had no life left, and although they did what they could to perswade her his disease was not great nor dangerous; she nevertheless grieved very much, but she grew desperate when she was inform'd that the French Army were so much up and down the Countrey, that it was dangerous travelling between *Casal* and *Alexandria*, whither she would go notwithstanding accompanied with onely very few on Foot, through by-ways, with intention to serve as Physitian to this Amorous sick man, she sent out a Scout before her journey, to be perfectly inform'd of the march of the enemies; that so she might the better chuse what way to take.

She

She was uncertain in her resolutions in what habit to travel in, whether that of her own sex or of a man; fearful of being known if she should make that journey in her ordinary dress; but having ask'd Counsel of her Governour in that affair, he advised her to go with very few in her company, and to disguise her self like a man.

The resolution for parting then being taken, after the Scout she sent was return'd, which was the same day that the Duke himself had inform'd her of his being ill; she discover'd her design to the Countess *Lovize* her sister a little before she went, this Countess *Lovize* having formerly travell'd as a man with a *Frenchman*, whom I spoke of before, who was her Gallant, offer'd her self now to accompany her sister in the same posture.

The Countess *Magaret* received this offer of her sisters very willingly, and was the more inclined to it, by perceiving they two were so much of a humour as to matter of journeys as well as other things; so away they went very late in the evening accompanied onely with their younger brother,

ther, and one man, to avoid the encounter of the Freuch, who costed up and down the Countrey every moment. They went out of the great rode, crossing the Fields by little by-paths, that were very much about, and made their journey much longer than the way they quitted had done, but as ill luck would have it, they met with what they avoided, and fell into the snare they took such pains to avoid.

They rested at night in a Village a little way off *St Saviour*, without making themselves known to their host, hoping to continue their way towards *Alexandria* very early in the Morning; but they were deceived, as the Proverb sayes, *He that reckons without his Host must reckon twice*. For it was scarce two hours within night, when there arrived twelve *Spanish* Cavaliers, (perhaps the Host himself had been their Spie) who, pretending to be French-men, assaulted the Inne where our amorous Pilgrims were lodg'd. These enemies came with so great a noise one would have thought they had been the whole French army; the poor Earl, who had accom-

accompanied his sisters, not having been accustomed to the noises of War, and such kind of assaults as that, being afraid of his life, got up all trembling to the highest Garret of the house to hide himself, thinking the very Flyes were Horses, and believing every Horse was a compleat Army of the enemies.

In the mean time these two Countesses, disguiz'd like men, were not yet got into bed, and staid still in the Chamber, almost in despair, yet the Countess *Lovize* rais'd her self a little out of her Fear, when she heard them speak French, having been us'd to men of that Nation, though in quality of Friends and not enemies, were those she had formerly convers'd with, which these Souldiers pretended not to be.

These brave Cavaliers were not much troubled to find out that these assieged persons were Females and not Males, as their habits spoke them; and it was the better for the Ladies that it was so, because that after they had given them the divertizement of a two hours siege, they went away betimes in the Morning to seek some other fortune,



tune, and left our Fair guests at Liberty, without suffering any damage from them at all, unless it were some few kisses which they were oblig'd to give them, and some other little rudenesses they offer'd them, which need not be explain'd to the Reader.

The Countess *Margaret* was not a little mortified to be surprized by such an assault as this, but on the contrary, the Countess *Lovize* was over-joyed in having gain'd the affection of those besiegers, and had diverted her self with those Counterfeit enemies, as may very well be imagin'd.

They went on their journey early in the Morning, towards *Alexandria*, although the Earl their brother advis'd them to return to *Casal*.

Certainly these illustrious travellers wanted Conduct, to trust themselves in a journey without any train in the time of war, and in a Countrey that swarm'd with Souldiers, not being ignorant that the enemies rang'd every where, even to the very Gates of *Casal*, two causes nevertheless excus'd them, Love and Curiosity; for in effect, there was nothing but the Love of the  
Countess

Countess *Margaret* to her Gallant, and the dishonest curiosity of the Countess *Louise* her Sister, which made them hazard that little honour they had left; For certainly, if they would have demanded a Convoy for their safety, they should not have been deny'd it; but, who is ignorant that Love is blind, and always in haste.

The Countess *Margaret* intended to relate this rencounter to the Duke, but her Brother and sister thought it not very convenient, least it might give some jealous trouble to that sick Lover, and therefore this pass under Silence.

At last, being come to their Journeys end, into the Dukes presence, who was in Bed, they did not trouble themselves with great Preambles and Ceremonies, nor to keep him in long discourses; but their first conversation was Embraces with all imaginable tenderness, which she gave to this poor sick man, who return'd the same to his Mistress (whose heart was pierc'd with griefe) although the Room was fill'd with many Captains, and some of the principal of the Army.

M

The

The Countess scarce had begun her Caresses to the Duke, but he seem'd much amended, and so much, that he lookt like one that never had been Sick, and also all that day he had no Feaver; which made it believed, that the Countess had brought some Antidote with her to drive away the Sickness of her Lover.

The General of the *Neapolitan* Cavalry, who was by the Duke when this Beauty enter'd the Chamber, taking leave presently of his Highness, in going to the Dore, said to one of his Friends who was in the Company, *We may very well take leave now, and go our wayes, for the Duke will be no more for us.*

Almost all the Commanders of the Army did nothing but grumble in the Camp at the Countesses coming thither; believing, that as long as the Duke had this Woman with him, he would forget his duty.

But, for all that, they found themselves happily deceiv'd, because the Duke recover'd as he was, though perhaps not altogether cur'd, by the sight of the Countess, gave himself  
up

up in good earnest to the exercise of his Charge.

It was a strange amazing sight, to see this Prince ride round about his Camp on Horseback with his Mistress, giving the necessary Orders to his Army, where he did wonders, that being his first time of Appearance in the Field; so that there was very few persons that did refuse him the Honour he had Merited, of delivering *Alexandria*; he knew so well how to make his Advantages of time and place, that the Besieged became in a little time besiegers themselves; and fill'd with extreame feares, those, who had been the most likely as Enemies and Besiegers, to have given a mortal apprehension to his whole Army. The Duke forbore not for all this, to give the best part of his time to his Amours with the Countess, his Ague being turn'd to a Tertian, which gave him some respite, but this alteration made it the more dangerous.

And since these Ladies had not brought with them Cloaths sutable to their Sex, they presently sent away an expresse to furnish them; it being ve-

ry unpleasant to the Duke to see her who posselt his heart, under any habit but her own; not at all caring to see her dress'd like a Man as well in the Chamber, as in the Camp, whither he often carry'd her.

As for what belong'd to the vertue of the Countess *Louize*, she lost not one hour of the day by idleness, her great pleasure being to receive the Visits of the Chief Commanders in that Army, amongst whom she pass'd her time with such satisfaction, that she often lost her self, so that it was impossible for her Sister to find her, it being certain that she had above half a dozen Favourites, who sail'd not to content her to their power; and for that reason a certain *Florentine* Gentleman, who, as well as the greatest Commanders, had received from the Countess *Louize* some Favours, told a Comrade of his, That he found the Whores of *Casal* very obliging.

The Newes of the Arrival of this Lady into the Camp, and of the Liberty which she afforded every one, to offer her their Service, as well as the goodness she had shew'd to that Commander



her pander we mention'd before, quickly spread it self into the *French* Camp, so that it afforded the best sport in the World: and there was a person, who, discoursing with the Duke of *Modena* of this Fair Curtisan, said, in derision of her, *Li Frances, Fanno Le Puttane, e li spagnoli le godono*; The *French* create the Whores, and the *spaniards* enjoy them.

This he said, in reflection upon her first Gallantry with the *French* Monsieur, which I have already told you of.

In fine, The *French* Army rais'd the Siege from before *Alexandria* in the night, the 16th. of *August*, after they had besieged it three Moneths; and they dislodg'd themselves with so little noise, and so secretly, that their Enemies themselves that were round about them perceived it not until morning after the Sun was up; and that from the Town Walls there was no Tents, nor any thing else to be seen.

The News was presently carry'd to the Duke, who was yet in Bed with his Goddess; he expressed no small displeasure

displeasure of this unexpected depart of his Enemies, chiefly having resolved to give them Battel the day following, believing, the Victory would certainly have been his, if he could have once disputed it with them.

So, as soon as he was up, he went to visit the Batteries that the *French* had made against the Town, having no body in his company but his Countess; her Sister, the Countess *Louiza* being gone in other Company; they staid nine dayes at *Alexandria*, and in the evening of the last day the Duke went away, accompanied by some of the chief Commanders amongst the *Spaniards*; and after he had given the necessary Orders for the conservation of that place, and recommended the care of the Army to his Lieutenant, he return'd to *Casal* with his Lady.

The joy of his arrival at *Casal* was Celebrated, that Town indeavouring to shew him all the Honour imaginable, in acknowledgment, that they lookt upon him as the Deliverer of a place of that importance; but, after all, those Feasts were kept with much modesty.

The

The greatest pleasure of the Duke, was, to pass the best and greatest part of the day in going here and there with the Countess thinking no more of the Army than of any thing else, to the great astonishment of all the World; who could not enough admire, how a Man could be so much devoted to the love of that Woman, for he was quite contrary to other men, who love change, and often turn their backs, not only to Whores, but even to their Wives, after they have Marry'd them: My dear Reader, I believe thou very well understandest me, and that it is not necessary I should explain my self further, and therefore I will only tell thee, That this Prince, the more he enjoy'd his Well-Beloved, the more his desire was kindled towards her; and in the Mornings, when he rose out of bed he was more passionately in Love with her, then at night when he went to bed to this Countess; the Fire of his Amorous passion was re-kindled at those times that others make use of for their repose.

From that time the Duke fail'd not one day of that Summer to Visit  
his

his Countess at her own house, and when they were alone they made no scruple to pull off their Cloaths, and go to Bed together, without any more Complements; The one, as if he were a Prince without a Principality; the other, as if she were one of those Cur-tizans of *Rome*, that are alwayes in their Smockes waiting for their *Bravos*. And although the Duke did often force himself to give Audience to all the World that came to his Court, yet it was in such a way, it was easily seen that he did it with *Chagrin*, and against his mind, and carry'd himself like an extravagant; and it is not hard for me to believe it, since that all his thoughts, his soul and heart breath'd nothing else but his love of the Countess.

But, for to give more convincing Proofes of this, and to assure the whole World, and chiefly his own Subjects, that the Countess was absolutely his, and possess all his Affections, he appointed her two Men for Guards, who wore the same Livery of his own Footmen, with order to follow this Lady whereever she went, and to Guard her

her House night and day; this so publick testimony of the Dukes love, made her be respected, and more esteem'd than ever, and also fear'd by every one, so much it would have been lookt upon as Sacrilege, to have given her the least displeasure, or discontent; and there were at that time four persons condemn'd to Banishment for having their Tongues a little too long, and had talk'd too lewdly against this beloved Lady.

There was also another had the like ill Fortune, but he rather out of Railery, then for any thing else; hearing the Barrenness of the Countess talk'd on, who had no Children, neither by her Husband, nor the Duke, began to laugh, and said, *Che non Faceva Fanciulli, Perche voleva esser troppo seminata.*

This poor Babler carry'd not his words to Purgatory, for they put him in Prison for some dayes, and he had staid there longer, but for the Intercession of that person whom he chiefly had offended by his words, and was not inclin'd to Revenge, although what had been said had not much pleas'd her.

Certainly



Certainly that Lady deserv'd the affections of so great a Prince very much, being adorn'd with all the advantageous qualities which she possess'd; she had a way of speaking so gentle and so attractive, that she captivated all hearts, and oblig'd them to love her; I do not mean here of her extraordinary and charming way with which she caressed the Duke, having no expressions capable to describe them, but she was inclin'd to oblige every body, so it were not to injure her self, nor as one may say, pick her own pocket, for in that case she had no memory, being like other women, who are sparing, not to say covetous; Pride never set his foot in her Carriage: but, on the contrary, the more she saw her self in the Princes Favour, the more did the desire in her increase to Speak Familiarly with all People, and to converse modestly with every one: The Balls, Feasts, and Recreations of taking the Air, alwayes took up her thoughts, and her minde went no further then those noble Divertisements; and nevertheless, when she chanc'd to meet the Duke in any place,

place, she express'd a carelesness of all things else besides the pleasing sight of his person, which she esteem'd above all; Anger nor Vanity never transported her; and if sometimes she had occasion to Chide the Servants of her House, she did it without those transports so ordinary to other Ladies; and also those Cloaths she had, so rich above the other Ladies of her quality in the Court, she wore them without vanity, pride, or scorn, and contempt to those that had not the like; It is true, she frequented the Churches more through Custome then any other reason; and if she went to the Masse, it was only to be seen, and to see; Yet, I must tell you, that she went thither sometimes, being Invited to it on purpose by the Ecclesiastical Men, to the end of giving more Lustre to the Solemnities, which were at that time Celebrated in the Church; and also to shew her the great esteem they had of her Person, with which nevertheless she was not satisfied. And although she had a Face Faire and agreeable enough, yet there is nothing very lascivious; but, whil'st the Duke  
was

was living, when she was near him, she lookt upon him as if she would have devour'd him with her Eyes, her looks at that time being the Effects of which, her Impudent Love was the Cause.

But, above all this, there was some light of Prudence shin'd in her carriage, which appear'd in effect a Miracle, because this Faire one was not like those Women that affect the Trade of *St. Placidia* to please their Friends; that is to say, For all her great power over the Duke, and that was so absolute, she could dispose of his Authority as she pleas'd, without the fear of displeasing him; she yet kept herself for all that within the bounds of an humble modesty, giving his Highness thanks for all the Favours he did her; assuring him, That she was more then satisfied to injoy alone the Loves of so great a Prince: And the more the Duke offer'd his Service to her, and desir'd her to make use of his Authority as she pleas'd, the less did she importune him with Requests; so that when the Duke press'd her to ask some Favour at his hands, she usually made  
answer,

answer, *His Highness granted her Favour great enough, to let her enjoy his Person.*

After all this she Favour'd whom she pleas'd, and who were recommended to her, which were without number, there being none ignorant, how great her power was with the Prince, whose heart she possess'd, and govern'd his whole will; and, for that reason every one made Addresses to her, to help them in their Affaires, according as they needed her Favour; but, on her side, she knew very well what kind of Favours she was to demand of his Highness, not to displease him; and she very rarely press'd him to grant any extraordinary matter, if she had been of an humour to enrich her self, she wanted no opportunities of doing it, and the Duke would never have hinder'd her; on the contrary, he advis'd her to do it, and gave her all the meanes possible for it; so far, that when any one address'd to himself to obtain a Request, he us'd to say, *For that you must Petition none but the Countess, and that was the onely way to obtain their end.*

That

That Charitable Countess had never yet the Repute of doing any thing out of Interest; but it has alwayes been thought, that all she did was to purchase to her self Friends, rather then through hopes of any gain, expressing alwayes her aversion to that Lucre; It is true notwithstanding, that when any one offer'd her some Fine thing, or considerable Summ of Money, she would do as those, who, laying their hands upon the Present offer'd them, usually say, There is no need of this, and yet take it willingly enough.

The greatest care of this Lady, and what she sought after with all the Passion imaginable, was the Advancement of her Brother, which put the Duke to a stand, what more to give him; having already Honour'd him with Employments and Offices very considerable, and much above his deserts; or at least if he did any way Merit them, it was very little: nevertheless the Countess never ceas'd begging for him, and could have wish'd her Brother rais'd above all the Princes of that Court.

The



The Arch-Duchess heard this news with a great heart-breaking; and notwithstanding all the efforts of which her vertue was capable, she could not hinder her self from being extreemly displeas'd at the Advancing of that young Lord, who never had a pretending Merit; but, that which occasion'd her greatest Affliction, was, to see her chiefest Servants rather cast down, then rais'd in the least; and us'd with scorn, that deserv'd to be treated with Honour; which caus'd these poor unfortunate Persons to say, *That the Duke shew'd more favour to the Brother of an Adulterous Countess, then to the Servants of a Princess his lawful and true Wife:* and amongst other things, witness many Libels and Satyrs, which I omit.

Although this innocent Princess receiv'd some kind of Mortification from all this, however she never had a resentment against the Duke, because in the first place she plainly saw, that he did nothing out of malice, but only to satisfie that blind passion, which had enslav'd him in the Chaines of that Concubine: And  
Secondly,

Secondly, she esteem'd it not just nor reasonable to compare these Gentlemen, persons of great Merit, with that Earle, that was a Man of no Honour.

In the mean time this Countess possess'd all the Favour of this Prince, and kept alone the two Keys of his Treasures; That of his Heart, by Love, injoying him without interruption: and the other, his Favours; since the Duke was so well pleas'd when his Mistriss made any Request to him; that she, knowing him of that humour, made pretensions to him only for his satisfaction, as it is easily to be known by this Letter following.

My

## My little Heart!

**C**Æsar comes to tell me, that thou hast an intention to ask some Favour of me, in behalf of a Person that address'd to thy Courtesie, and because thou wert apprehensive of displeasing me, thou didst not mention it yesterday in the afternoon, that we were together. This way of thine in being bashful, makes me believe that thou dost not love me: for certainly, if thou didst love me, thou wouldest act as freely with me, as I do with thee; also if I had ever yet refused thee any thing, I confess thou mightest with reason ask me nothing: but since I am so glad to grant thee all things, why art thou unwilling to ask me any thing? To what end is Love painted blind and naked, if it is not to teach Lovers Familiarity one with the other? The Principality is mine, and I am thine, but the authority is common to us both, that is to say, thou maist make use of me, and I of the State; if thou lovest me then ask, command, and love thy

Charles.

But notwithstanding all these Pro-  
 testations and Testimonies of love  
 from the Duke, this Fair One would  
 never importune him by asking any  
 favour that would bring the least dis-  
 quiet to his Highness, having wit  
 enough to discern between those fa-  
 vours she was to ask for his confide-  
 ration, and those she was to demand  
 for herself. That for which she im-  
 portun'd him the most, and rung in his  
 ears from Morning until night, was,  
 That he would carry her every where  
 with him; and not being pleas'd with  
 staying so long at *Casal*, desiring to go  
 into the Countrey, and which was worst  
 of all, she would not go that journey,  
 unless the Duke went with her. The  
 Duke having at that time a Fancy to  
 see *Gennes*, she begun to second it,  
 and to sollicit his Highness by all kind  
 of Supplications, not sparing all the  
 flatteries and courtships imaginable,  
 to make him condescend to her desire,  
 who was already her slave of Love,  
 which she held in chains, she met with  
 no small repugnance, nay much more  
 than she found when she was disputing  
 with

with him concerning her journey to *Venice*, which, nevertheless the Duke had made chiefly upon her consideration.

Notwithstanding she got the victory, and according as she desired they parted from *Casal* in the beginning of *July* with a very small train, and without discovering his Highnesses designs to any, he made as though he would go to *Mantua*, not letting it be known which way he would go.

The *Genoises* did not a little wonder to hear of the arrival of this Prince in their Town, but more to see him there, since he was there before they could hear of his intentions of coming to that place, and there were many that would not believe that the Duke was come thither in so unseasonable a time, and without any business there; but when they saw him accompanied with his Countess, they laid aside their wonder, all the world believing that that journey was made for the satisfaction alone of that Favorite, who had certainly a curiosity to see that Town, which is esteem'd one of



the most curious that is to be seen.

The Senate, following its ordinary generosity, received the Duke with all the demonstrations of Love that they are accustomed to pay to Princes, who travel *incognito*, and regal'd him with a great number of sweet-meats and other refreshments, and besides that honour, he received many visites from publike as well as private persons; but to say the truth, the Duke not going thither to no other end but to divert the Countess, and satisfy her desires, he was not very glad to be importun'd by all these visites, it not being convenient for either of them to receive those Civilities, and therefore to many it was said, the Duke was not in his Lodging, and it was no great Lye for those few dayes he staid in that Town, which scarce amounted to three days, he did nothing else but go up and down with his Beloved, whom he led by the hand, followed by the Countess *Lovize* her sister, and two other Ladies who came to keep her  
com-

company, which were also led by the Courtiers.

Two things appear'd strange to the inhabitants of *Genes*: The first was the Dukes entring into a Church to hear Mass, kneel'd upon one step with the Countess, to whom he did nothing but talk from the beginning to the end, as one may say, From *L' introibo* until *Deo gratias*, de *L' in principio*, which made some say, That the Religion of that Prince consisted in words and not in deeds. The second thing so extraordinary to the people was, That when he went to see the Palace, he still led the Countess by the hand, as if he had been her Squire; but for my part I do not think that such a wonder, because though he led her in publike places, yet there was not so much cause for wonder, to see him lead her in a place where she was not to be seen by so many. There was at that time at *Genes*, a woman Cavalier, who one day discoursing with some of that Town concerning the Ladies that follow'd the Duke, or rather, whom the Duke followed, and amongst the rest

speaking of the licentious disorder'd Life and Carriage of the Countess *Lovize*, happened to say, When the Duke shall have dishonour'd the rest of you *Monsieurs* of *Genes*, he will possibly drive away all the Cows to *Rome*.

But the *Genois*, who was as witty as pleasant, made him this reply, *I assure you that his Highness shall do nothing, because I know for certain that the Romans love the Calves better than the Cows.*

The same day the Duke went from *Genes*, there were two Father *Capuchins*, the most famous in all the Province, who had undertaken to accomplish that which the Father *Catori* could not, and who demanded Audience of his Highness, pretending they had Orders from *Rome* to speak to him, press'd on to that, as some thought, by the Cardinal *Durazzo*, archbishop of *Genes*, a Person of a singular goodness, whose Zeal has not onely edified those of his Church, but of all the World.

But the Countess guessing very well  
for

for what those good Fathers came for, and what was their design, that she left not the Duke a moment, nevertheless because they were so importunate to speak with the Duke in private, saying, That they had great things to communicate to him concerning his Person and State; The Countess was forc'd to withdraw, leaving the Duke in the Chamber with the *Capuchins*.

The discourse which these good Fathers had with the Duke was full of holy Zeal, and they spake with so much tenderness, that one of them melted into tears; at every word, they conjur'd him in the Name of God, to forsake this scandalous life, which he led before all his Subjects, or, to say rather, in the sight of all the World; they added further, that, The Pope himself had wept many times, and that his clemency once being at an end, he should be oblig'd then to proceed to other Courses. They forgot nothing to inspire into him some Christian Sentiments of Heaven and Hell, and they let him see the

impossibility there was to attain to the first, whilst he led this disorder'd and licentious life, and the infallibility of his falling into the other. They alleadg'd to him many Places out of the holy Scripture, which they pointed out to him, to let him see that the sins of the Prince was often a cause of God's punishing the people, by an infinite number of Miseries, Warres, and Plagues. In fine, they set before him all the most solid and strong Reasons, that their Wits could furnish them with, not sparing for complaints, and threats from the Court of *Rome*, protesting to him that if his Highness did not alter his Course of life, that Court was resolved to proceed against him by the wayes of Ecclesiastical Censures the most severe. Briefly, they were not niggardly of all that a true Charity, with which they were animated, could suggest to them, to make the Duke quit his love to the Countess, and deliver himself from that shameful slavery that had kept him so long a time in bondage.

Du-



During the Conversation of these holy Fathers with the Duke, the Countess was hearkning at the door, where she could hear every word distinctly: she was in despair, with the fear that the Duke should yield at last to all these Councils of these Fathers; he heard them with much Patience, without saying the least word, till at last, weary of hearing them longer, and to hear the insolent reproaches, which they made him, he answer'd them, *That they had Chastity in their Convent, and at Rome the Cardinals had Wenches, and the convenience of diverting themselves, and therefore he did not wonder at their speaking to him in that manner.* And as one of them replied something that toucht the reputation of the Countess, who, as I have already said, was behind the door, she came into the room, and interrupted their discourse, and pretending to speak low, she said to the Duke, so that these good Fathers heard her well enough,

*Send*

*Send these Fathers to the Convent,  
and for us let us go to Casal.*

After that his Highness taking his well-beloved by the hand, began to say,

*These Fathers would have us wiser  
than the Princes and Patriarchs of the  
old time, who had at least one wife  
and one Concubine, not to speak of a  
great number besides, of both the one  
and the other.*

To which one of the Capuchins replied,

*But your Highness does not see that  
we are now in the times where the Go-  
spel is to be observed, and that it is  
indisputable for us, to act like Jews,  
now we are Catholicks.*

The Prince, touch'd to the quick by these words, answer'd them with a threatening and fierce air,

*My Fathers, without any other con-  
sideration, I will throw you out of the  
Window, and so we will use like Jews  
those people that understand not how to  
treat with Catholike Princes.*

Having said that, he presently cal-  
led one of his Gentlemen, and com-  
manded

manded them to conduct those Religious men out of the Palace : after that he turn'd his back upon them, and went into a Chamber with the Countess, who being in great wrath at these Fathers, protested in grinding her teeth, that she would never give alms to a *Capuchin*, and she did not onely say so, but do so, so that some people said, That the tast of the *Capuchins* of *Genes* had taken away the power of eating from the *Capuchins* of *Casal*, and that these last did penance for the faults those others had committed.

Truly if these holy Fathers had had to do with some other Prince, it might have been fear'd that they had not come off at so cheap a rate; but for good luck to them they spoke to a very good Prince, who was of no ill nature, prefer'd quiet above all things.

The Duke entertain'd himself often with the proceeding of the *Capuchins*, in his return to *Casal*, and particularly one night in the Inn at *Saravalla*, where he was lodg'd, he said to her,

My

*My Heart, if I have loved thee hitherto, to satisfy my Love which would have it so; I will love thee henceforward, to make them mad that would not have it so.*

Upon that the Countess taking her time, replied, *If your Highness should cease loving me, you would let people see you are afraid of Monks.*

All this was done to turn the Duke from the love of this crafty woman, but in vain; for all the trouble the Monks gave themselves, who came as Embassadors from *Rome*, served for no end but to enflame the hearts of these two Lovers the more, for since the Countess apprehended the loss of the Dukes favour, fearing that some time or other he might suffer himself to be touch'd by some remorse of Conscience, she imploy'd all her Caresses that her Love could devise, and such Charms she made use of, that they were assuredly powerful enough to have provok'd our Pope *Alexander* himself to have committed the sin of adultery with her, although he is a man whose life is with-

without reproach; so that the Duke who was tender in his love, and loved to be made much of, seemed to melt as lead in the Fire, and appear'd in that encounter as if he would have sooner consented to lose his State, than his Mistress.

After that Voyage the Duke left her at *Casal*, whilst he went to *Mantua* about some particular affairs, he staid there above a Moneth without going to see the Countess, who was so afflicted for not seeing him that posselt her heart, not satisfied with his Letters, which she received from him every week; she went out very early one Morning towards *Mantua*, to find his Highness; but her good fortune hastning her joy, she met the Duke upon the way, who went with her to *Casal*, renewing her caresses, and making amends for the time lost.

Some moneths after it happened, to the great displeasure of the Duke and resentment of the Countess, that many Copies of a Manuscript, intituled, *Whoredom*, in form of Letters, under the name of an unknown Author, were



were sent to divers of the chief Nobility of *Casal* and *Mantua*, and also into the Convents, the Duke was much troubled, being describ'd there as the Prince of Whores, and chief of the bawdy-houses; and that which inrag'd him the more was, That it spoke of the other Princes of *Italy* with Elogies and Expressions of respect. That Satyre said more than it is possible to imagine against the house of the Countess, and it was impossible to speak with more infamy, and it was the more so, because it mingled truth and lyes together, but in such a manner, that it all lookt like truth; and certainly it was reasonable enough, for they were a Family of Six persons, whose life was the horror of all the World. In the meantime, these Earls and Countesses had no great reason to be angry at what was there said, if they had been Lovers of truth: For their house had for certain been a perfect bawdy-house, there being Six Ladies in that Family who lived almost publikely like common Whores, I say, almost, because

because there were three of them who carried it with more discretion, which were the two wives of the brothers to the Countess, and one of the Countess *Lovizes* daughters, who acted their parts more privately, and yet nevertheless would not suffer a Friend to die: but as for the rest, which were the Countess *Margaret*, and *Lovize*, and another of their sisters, kept by a *Mantua* Lord; they kept no measures neither in their speeches nor manner of Life, so that they did all that they fancied was lawful, and so their house merited the name was given it.

This good and jolly company were present with the Duke in all his divertizements, which the more anger'd all Persons of Honour, and gave a great scandal to all the people of the Duchy of *Mantua*, and also to all *Italy*.

This Prince led this dissolute and licentious life with the Countess fifteen year, and so gave example to other Gentlemen of his Court to pass their time with the other Ladies, which

which I have told you of ; so that with reason her house was called a bawdy-house, there being no other discourses heard there but what were impudent and dishonest, every one taking a pride in speaking as wickedly as they could : This oblig'd all the other Ladies of the Town, that were of Honour and Quality to avoid this abominable Company, and fly from those beastly women, as from the Devil of Hell ; Many other accidents happened to this Prince by his love to the Countess every day ; but a hundred Pens would scarce be enough to recount them all : I have writ the Story of this amour but superficially, for to repeat all things would be too tedious, besides there are many things in it which, if writ, would cause nothing but scandal.

The love of the Duke was at this pass that he delighted in nothing but the love of the Countess, when it pleas'd Heaven to take away that great scandal from the eyes of all the people, and put an end to that crime which caused so many others, by  
giving

giving a Period to the life of him that committed it.

This Prince then was taken in the beginning of *September*, in the Year 1665, with so violent a Feaver, that the first minute it was thought Malignant by all the Physicians; and soon after, not onely dangerous, but desperate: The Dutchess appear'd sensibly afflicted with this Sickness of the Dukes, and omitted nothing that she thought could help him with all possible diligence; and which was more commendable, she assisted him with all the affection of her heart; which caus'd many to say, *That if she had been in the same condition as the Duke her Husband was in at that time, he would not have been carry'd with so much heate and passionate care to her recovery.*

There was Command given to all the Churches, To say their Prayers to God for the health of the Duke; but since there was no hope given on that side for his Recovery, he was advis'd to make his Will, which he did orderly enough: And it is true, that in  
 thinking

thinking of his Countess he sigh'd bitterly; and, desiring to leave her something, he was silent a little while; after that, giving another great sigh, he made known his Intentions.

My Lord the Bishop, who assisted him in those last moments of life, made him understand, That for the satisfaction and edification of his Soul, he ought to aske forgiveness of her Highness his Wife, for the Injury he had done her, to which he seem'd very much inclin'd; and then causing that Amiable Dutches to come near his Bed, he embrac'd her with his left Arme, and taking her hands with his right, he said to her weeping, *Princess, my soul, this minute I am come to know how much I have offended God by my Sin; and I also know that which I have committed in relation to you; but my Lord Bishop, who takes a care of my Soul in this extremity, assures me, That I may hope for the Pardon of the good God; therefore I pray you that on your side also, you will give me some testimonies of your forgiving me also.*

The



The Tears and Sighs of that poore Princess stopt her speech, and would not let her pronounce one word; but they wrought so sensibly upon all that were present, that the noise of their Groanes and Teares, which they could not in pity refraine to so touching a sight, was very mournful, and so lamentable a hearing, that the Bishop fearing it might add to the affliction of that sick Prince, councell'd the Dutchess to retire; and to that end took her by the Arme and led her into another Roome, where she began to weep in good earnest.

Towards the evening of that same day the Duke call'd for the young Prince his Son, to whom he gave his blessing; and after he had given him some Instructions of Living well, he concluded in these words; *My very dear and well-beloved Son, obey your Mother, and the more, because she is a woman of great Vertue; and take not example from your Father, who is a great Sinner.*

The next day, being the 15 of September, he past out of this miserable

Valley of Teares into the place of eternal Felicity, leaving the whole Court in an extraordinary sadness, and almost inconsoleable grief; the noise of his Death was no sooner spread through the Town, but all the People was seen in Teares; and with reason, for set aside his Sin, which after all that can be said, proceeded from the weakness of humane nature, he had all the Vertues; or to say better, in a word, he had all qualities necessary to make a great Prince, and a great Monarch,

He us'd his Subjects very gently, and help'd them in all things to his power; having been often heard to say, *That he chose rather to be a Poore Prince, and to have rich Subjects, then to have his Subjects poore, and to be himself a very Opulent Prince.* Above all, no person ever went away discontented from him: He also recommended to the Judges, Mercy and Justice; in fine, in two Ages there had not been seen in *Italy* a Prince like him, if the Love he had for that Countess had not hindred him from exercising that goodness, vertue, and courage

courage, which were so natural to him.

The People wept for him, and should not yet dry up their Teares, if the goodness of that Princess-Regent, and the hopes they have in the vertue of this young Prince, the sole Heir of the House of *Gonzague*, and only Child to the Deceased Duke; which is brought up by that Mourning Turtle with so much care, did not comfort them; his vertue, his watchfulness, and assiduous attachments to the Government of the State, has Captiv'd the hearts of all the People, and makes him still be ador'd and lov'd by all the World.

The little Duke, of the Age of fourteen yeares, gives no little consolation to the Dutches his Mother, and to her Subjects; and I perswade my self easily, that those incomparable qualities which begin to shine in his Person, will make his name and memory eternal amongst those Great Men, whose name is in Veneration.

He already receives Ambassadors with so good a Grace, and with so much  
sweetness

sweetneſs, that they cannot enough admire, how there can be ſo much virtue and capacity in an age ſo tender.

It is thought, that the Death of the Duke is like to bring no good to the Houſe of the Counteſs; and already they begin to take away thoſe Employments with which the late Duke had Honour'd them, to the great ſatisfaction of all the World; and to ſay truth, the abaſing of that Houſe is the Subject of the Mirth of a great many; and ſo much the more, becauſe thoſe Earles, in conſideration of their Siſter *Margaret*, had held up their heads ſo high, that (as 'tis ſaid) they could ſcarce with the end of their Noſe touch their equals without much difficulty.

This Change will certainly be very cruel to them, and they will have much trouble to live with the young Prince, after another manner then they did with His Father; it being very likely, that they not having been uſ'd to obey, they will not know how to carry themſelves to the Prince as their lawful Sovereign Lord, having accuſtom'd to treat with the late Duke

Duke as Familiar Friends, and not as Subjects, and therefore they have reason to fear, that this alteration will bring a notable change into their Family; foreseeing very well, that if that young Prince once take upon him the Government of the State, he will make them act with him after quite another manner then they did with his Father: And this is one of the Chief Reasons why I will conclude this Story by the Death of the Duke, without speaking further of the Countess, no more then of other things, waiting for some other occasion, which we shall not want in time.

I will not however finish this Story, my dear Reader, till I have told you my Thoughts, which is, that you have not taken so much delight in Reading it, as I did in Composing it; if you had been an Eye-witness of all that I have written, I doubt not but you also would have been as well pleas'd; and I know it by myself, who having seen all this History, and all the passages of this Amour, I receive  
more



more satisfaction in committing it to Paper : if you have not receiv'd what you expected , or that my Style has not pleas'd you , or if by misfortune you meet with faults, I prethee think, if thou art discreet, that Love is blind and hath a Band upon his Eyes, so hard, that it is impossible for him to see either his own Faults, or that of others ; I say of others, because if you should have a mind to undertake my Correction, I shall not be of an humour to follow your Sentiments ; it suffices me , that I had design to divert you ; but, if my ill Fortune has depriv'd me of that good luck, I desire you to arme your selves with patience as well as I.

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*F I N I S.*

